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ABSTRACT

This report presents the findings of a national survey of diocesan and religious priests who were ordained between 1980 and 1984. The questionnaire issued to the respondents asked about three topics of concern to Catholic Church leadership: priestly morale, priestly identity, and priestly roles. The research examined seven key issues, each of which is the subject of a separate chapter: (1) who are the priests? (2) priestly life today; (3) attitudes toward seminary and the transition to priesthood; (4) satisfaction with the priesthood; (5) priestly identity; (6) preferred priestly roles; and (7) the effects of programs. A concluding section of the report contains six commentaries on the survey findings by six experienced churchmen. Appendices present survey and research data, and a 19-item list of references. (DB)

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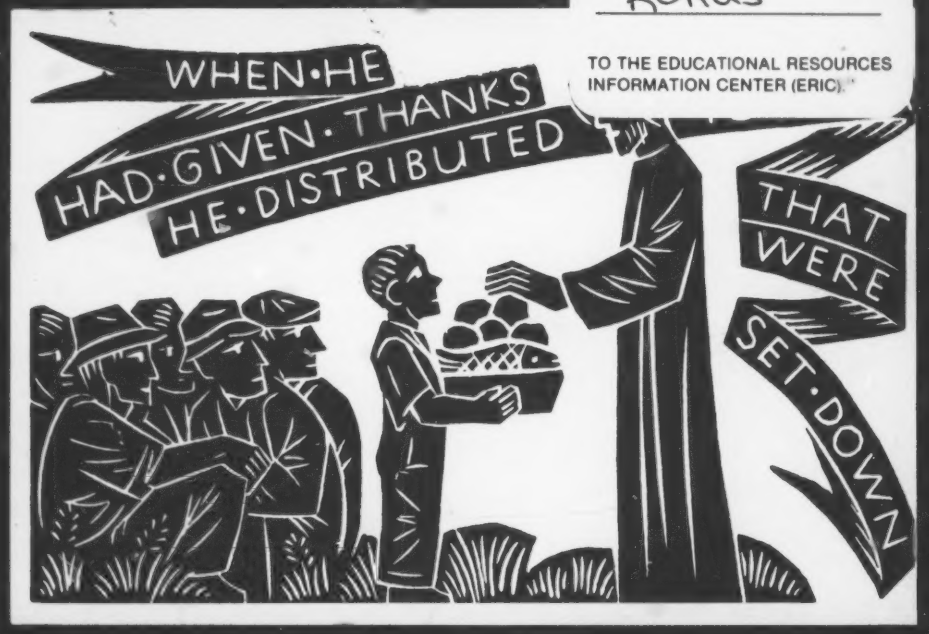

A Report Funded by the
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A Survey of Priests Ordained Five to Nine Years

EUGENE F. HEMRICK
DEAN R. HOGE

Commentaries by

Rev. Howard P. Bleichner, SS
Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, OSB
Rev. Richard W. Burton
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National Catholic Educational Association
Seminary Department

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary of Major Findings	v
Acknowledgements	ix
Introduction	1
Chapter 1 Who Are the Priests?	5
Chapter 2 Priestly Life Today	9
Chapter 3 Attitudes Toward Seminary and the Transition to Priesthood	13
Chapter 4 Satisfaction With the Priesthood	19
Chapter 5 Priestly Identity	23
Chapter 6 Preferred Priestly Roles	29
Chapter 7 The Effects of Programs	35
Commentaries	
Rev. Howard P. Bleichner, SS	41
Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, OSB	43
Rev. Richard W. Burton	45
Rev. Robert J. Wister	47
Most Rev. Donald W. Wuerl	50
Appendices	53
References	72

Summary of Major Findings

Age, Living Situation, Main Positions and Duties of Priests Ordained Five to Nine Years

Respondents for "A Survey of Priests Ordained Five to Nine Years" were ordained between 1980 and 1984. The overall age range is 30 to 81 with most 34 to 40. The largest ethnic groups are Irish and German.

By far most priests live in a rectory or community, and say they would prefer to be in self-chosen groups, not assigned groups, in regard to living preferences. Over a third of diocesan priests and a fifth of religious priests would prefer living outside a rectory or community.

Thirty-six percent of diocesan priests and 26% of religious priests had a program in the seminary aimed at preparing them for their first assignment.

The most common position diocesan priests hold is associate pastor and for religious it is the educational apostolate.

Spiritual Exercises

Mass is celebrated on a regular basis, the recitation of the Breviary is generally sporadic, reception of the sacrament of penance is infrequent, spiritual reading is moderate, whereas Bible reading, getting together for renewal days or support groups and making private days of renewal are somewhat frequent.

One-fifth of priests do not have a spiritual director and another fifth meet with a spiritual director only on very special occasions.

Continuing Education and Reading

Since ordination almost one-third of religious report going for studies full time compared to 13% of the diocesans. A little over one-fifth of diocesans have earned an M.A. and 6% a Ph.D. compared to about two-fifths of religious earning an M.A. and 14% earning a Ph.D.

The three authors who most influence priests today are: 1. Karl Rahner, 2. Henri Nouwen, and 3. Thomas Merton. The magazines *America*, *The Priest* and *Origins*, and the newspaper *National Catholic Reporter* are the most frequently mentioned reading materials for priests.

Preparation for First Assignment and Priestly Ministry

A little over a third of diocesan priests and a quarter of religious had a transitional program to prepare them for their first assignment and had a formal mentoring program on their first assignment.

Almost all priests had field education in the seminary and found it very to somewhat helpful. They feel they learned from it about the great diversity of apostolates, life issues, varying theological views, ministerial settings, and styles of ministry.

Priests feel very well prepared in scripture, sacramental and systematic theology, fairly well prepared in liturgy, homiletics, moral theology and pastoral care, and poorly prepared for the RCIA and administration.

The two courses proving most valuable to a priest's work are scripture and pastoral counseling.

Priests feel well prepared in self-discipline needed to accomplish their work, working with women, and affirming people. They feel least prepared to work with Afro-Americans and ethnic groups, and to conduct meetings.

Priests who had field training and a mentoring program reported they felt much more prepared for priestly challenges they encountered than priests without such programs.

Seminary Training with Non-Ordination Students

By far the majority of priests believe that non-ordination students should receive training with seminarians. A number of priests did have some reservations: "Sometimes classes water down theology," "an impression is given that seminarians are no different

than the laity," and "seminarians need an amount of time away together to cause priestly bonding."

The Future and its Challenges

The biggest challenges priests see in the future are: 1. the need for stronger evangelization, 2. responding to the priest shortage, and 3. working more closely with the laity.

To meet the challenges of the future, priests feel seminaries need to encourage creativity, strengthen a priest's ability to empower others and develop collaborative skills. They need to give seminarians more exposure to the real world. A smaller number emphasized increasing solid spirituality, more emphasis on academics than field work, orthodoxy, and stricter standards.

To meet the future challenges to celibacy, priests say that the seminary needs to talk about it more, be more open and be more realistic.

The key areas in which priests wished their seminary training had provided better preparation are: 1. coping with rectory living, 2. prayer life, 3. the ability to be flexible, and 4. serving people.

Satisfaction with Essentials for Priestly Effectiveness

For the majority of priests their first assignment was good primarily because of good pastor role models. A number reported it was detrimental to their priesthood because of a pastor who was a bad role model.

Priests have high satisfaction with their current work but have moderately low satisfaction with opportunities for continuing education.

Satisfaction is moderately high on their personal health and leisure, spiritual life, psychological well-being and living a celibate life.

Diocesan priests who serve in educational apostolates are the most satisfied with their current work, while those serving in parishes are least satisfied.

Priests in educational apostolates also feel happiest about utilizing their talents.

Satisfactory relationships are high with respect to working with laity and women religious but a bit lower with regard to priests, bishops and superiors.

Priests ordained at an older age report higher satisfaction in many areas of their priesthood and are more definite about entering the priesthood if they had their choice again.

Priests are most comfortable celebrating the sacraments. They are fairly comfortable with church social justice teachings, being a public figure, the spirituality of the priesthood, and wearing public symbols (collar or habit), with the increase of non-ordained persons in ministry, and with the permanent diaconate.

They are least comfortable with the governance of the church and with its moral teachings.

Comfortable with Roles and Supporting Environment

Priests are most comfortable talking about a personal problem with a close priest friend, a spiritual director, or a close layman friend. They are a little less comfortable with a close laywoman friend, and they feel least comfortable talking with another priest who is not a close friend or with a bishop or superior.

Half of the priests would be willing to attend primarily to the sacramental life of the church and to let the laity assume responsibility for other leadership functions.

Attitudes Toward the Essentials of Priesthood and Ministry

Priests affirm that being a scholar, researcher, chancery official, or administrator is a valid priestly role.

Priests are moderately certain that ordination confers on the priest a new status making him essentially different from the laity and they are emphatic that the priest is *the* man in society who proclaims God's Word and provides the sacraments.

Priests have mixed views about whether the priest is a "man set apart" and whether he is essentially a member of the bishop's team.

Almost 90% have no problem working side by side with sisters or permanent deacons.

Two-thirds report that the bishops' pastorals have been helpful to their ministry.

The vast majority say ecumenical efforts are not a waste of time.

Two-thirds are in favor of continuing to allow married Anglican priests to become Catholic priests.

The threats of proselytizing by other denominations are of major concern to priests.

About a third are concerned about the increase in interfaith marriages and a third say that Catholicism is becoming less distinguishable from other denominations.

Identity and Inspiration in the Priesthood

Celebrating the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, gives a priest his greatest priestly identity. Most inspiring to priests is the faith and spirituality of the laity, especially when the laity face a crisis such as death or are searching for God in their lives.

Over three-fourths believe there is a critical shortage of priests, and over three-fourths try to encourage vocations as much as possible.

Most priests are very happy to pretty happy about the "way things are these days" in their lives, and over 80% would definitely or probably enter the priesthood again if they had their choice.

Primary Ideals About Priesthood

There is strong and equal consensus among diocesan and religious priests that it is a strong ideal of theirs to:

Be a representative of the Gospel's teachings on the needy in our midst.

Be a herald of the Word by preaching and encouraging the faithful to study and meditate on the scriptures.

Build and nurture a community spirit in which there is a sense of belonging and mission.

Practice the prophetic role of the priest by interpreting God's Word for the faithful.

Teach the Gospel consciously through personal witness.

Encourage the Christian community to develop its own ministries.

Diocesan and religious priests differ however on the following ideals:

To preserve the ecclesial and social structure of the church through teaching and upholding the church's tradition. (Diocesan priests are more in favor of this than religious priests.)

To dialogue with the world in order to enhance constructive action and harmony within it. (Religious are more in favor of this ideal).

To be an extension of the bishop. (Diocesan priests favor this more.)

To be a pastoral leader entrusted with the spiritual governance of the laity. (Diocesan priests favor this more.)

To be a catechist. (Diocesan priests favor this more.)

In general, diocesan priests are more concerned with upholding institutional church structures and religious are more concerned with communal bonds and a missionary outreach.

Priests ordained at an older age are more institutionally oriented. Their ideal of the priesthood more often centers around: 1. preserving the ecclesial and social structure of the church through teaching and upholding the church's traditions, 2. pastoring the church through the transmission of doctrinal truths, 3. being an extension of the bishop, collaborating with and helping him, 4. being a leader of Christian worship in the community by performing liturgical rites which are exclusive to the priesthood, 5. living celibacy as a sign of devotion to the coming of God's kingdom, 6. being a pastoral leader entrusted with the spiritual governance of the laity, and 7. being a catechist responsible for the teaching role of the community.

Impact of Programs and Experiences

Whether these priests had attended college seminary or not seems to make little difference in their attitudes today.

Religious priests who attended different types of seminary (free-standing, university-related, or collaborative) have some differences in attitudes today, but for diocesan priests there are no differences.

Priests who were in programs preparing them for their first assignment report overall better preparation for the practical and professional tasks of priesthood.

Priests whose first assignments were helpful have higher morale. Today these priests are more comfortable with other priests and their bishop or superior, and look more favorably on living in a rectory.

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Introduction

Research on Young Priests

The present study continues a tradition of sociological studies of young American Catholic priests. The first major study of this group was done by Joseph Fichter in 1966. His purpose was to hear the views of younger priests not well represented in decision-making circles; he called the report *America's Forgotten Priests—What They Are Saying*. He surveyed a random sample of all diocesan priests who were not pastors or monsignors; the average years since ordination was 9.6. Fichter asked them about their priesthood, their seminary training, and their present joys and frustrations. The respondents reported that seminary training had prepared them to lead a holy and intellectual life, but it had not trained them adequately to deal with lay people or to handle parish problems. They also reported strained relationships with older priests in rectories, and they complained that their talents were not being utilized well, since too often they were given menial work.

Soon afterward, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops commissioned a large study of the state of the American priesthood. It engaged the National Opinion Research Center to carry out a nationwide survey, which was done in 1970 and reported in a later book (NORC, 1972). It was a landmark study, not specifically focused on young priests but producing a wealth of data. It found morale problems among some younger priests, partly due to loneliness and partly due to difficulties with persons with authority—mainly bishops and superiors. There were very large differences in theological views between younger and older priests.

An important study was done in the early 1970s in the Archdiocese of Hartford (Hall and Schneider, 1973). It was a thorough study of priestly work satisfaction, morale, and identity in the archdiocese. The researchers found rather low morale among the curates, who told of being given trivial jobs to do—or no jobs at all, and of having no personal autonomy. Thus the researchers recommended greater attention to the first assignments of priests after ordination so that these assignments would provide psychological successes.

An incisive book, not widely recognized, titled *The First Year of Priesthood*, was published in 1978 by a counselor of priests (O'Rourke, 1978). He describes the most common first-year experiences of priests, including the "sink-or-swim model," the "domesticating model," and the "apprenticeship model." These first-year experiences are not planned, yet they occur due to the personalities and attitudes of other priests in the rectories. Rectory living is a universal problem of first-year priests, and it complicates the main psychological task of the first year, that is, the establishment of human relationships that are both personally satisfying and professionally productive. A beginning priest often experiences a fear that the people don't need him or don't like him; he has difficulties with intimacy, because rectory living obstructs it, and the priest has no other family to go to. The author recommends improved training for the transition from seminary to priesthood and a program providing each beginning priest with a precepter (outside the parish) to guide him.

These problems have received much attention by seminary administrators. Theologates have been engaging in constant experimentation with new programs for the last two decades. It is no exaggeration that Catholic theologates have changed more in the last 25 years than in the previous century. They have improved teaching methods, shifted from Latin to English theology texts, relaxed discipline, introduced field education and internship years, and enrolled non-priesthood students. (For histories, see Kauffman, 1988; White, 1989; Buechlein, 1989.) Diocesan administrations have also improved, with the introduction of priests' councils, expanded consultation

about personnel decisions, and improved communication. Yet, numerous issues concerning seminaries are still being debated in 1990, of which we will mention five.

(1) Is it beneficial to include non-priesthood students in the same programs and the same classes as priesthood candidates? Opinions vary widely, and Vatican authorities fear that the practice weakens priestly identity among the priesthood candidates in those programs. (For discussions, see O'Meara, 1985; Schreiter, 1990; Fox, 1990.)

(2) What is the impact of college seminaries? Are their graduates different from others in the theologate, and do they help foster priestly identity and commitment?

(3) Is there value in transition programs and mentorship programs designed to prepare seminary graduates for priestly life after ordination?

(4) Should the four years of theology be devoted mostly to philosophy and theology, rather than practical or pastoral subjects? Can the former, or the latter, be acquired later if the priest feels the need? In the crowded seminary curriculum, what is essential and what can be left to continuing education after ordination? (See Bleichner, 1983; Fox, 1990.)

(5) Most crucial, according to numerous writers, is the need for a compelling theology of priesthood for the years ahead. Due to rising expectations of priests by laity, broadening of ministries, expanding lay staffs in parishes, and manifold innovations in church life, priests face confusion about their central identity, and this in turn obscures the task of seminary training.

The 1990 Study

The present study is one of a series of research studies funded by the Lilly Endowment to help seminaries. The series includes two earlier nationwide surveys of students in theologates, done in 1984 and 1986 (Hemrick and Hoge, 1985, 1987; Potvin, 1985) an examination of seminaries today, based on visits and interviews (Schuth, 1989), and an analysis of perseverance of seminary students (Potvin and Muncada, 1990). The present study was designed to get the benefit of views of young priests—who are in a position to reflect on their training and the transition from seminary to priesthood. These men have views which need to be heard.

Early in the process we decided to survey priests only a few years out of seminary. To survey older priests would have less practical value, since Catholic seminaries have changed substantially in the past two decades, and hearing older priests praise or condemn the seminary life of yesteryear has little practical utility. It was decided to survey five classes of ordinands—men who are five, six, seven, eight, and nine years past ordination. This would provide us an assessment of seminaries in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The questionnaire we developed asks about three topics of concern to Catholic Church leadership: priestly morale, priestly identity, and priestly roles. The problem of morale has been widely discussed, most acutely in the 1989 document "Reflections on the Morale of Priests," written by a committee of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB, 1989). Do seminary experiences in any way affect morale of priests a few years after ordination?

The topic of priestly identity is continually raised today in discussions of changing seminary life. Older priests sometimes lament the loss of priestly camaraderie today, which formerly was the fruit of close living in seminary classes. Some argue that the newer types of seminaries, which are often in the midst of university communities and no longer clearly set apart, fail to produce a strong priestly identity. Others argue, on the contrary, that today's church requires a new kind of seminary training more closely related to laity and to university life—and seminaries including laity will succeed in producing a better kind of priestly identity (on the debate see Bleichner, 1983; O'Meara, 1985; Fox, 1990; and many others).

Priestly roles today are not as clearly specified as in decades past, and seminary students are faced with making choices among several different role emphases upheld by this or that segment of the Catholic community. Should the priest be more oriented to the hierarchical authority or to the local community of faith in the parish? Should the priest stress the role of social leader of the parish community or the role of personal witness and exemplar of faith? Should he live in the midst of lay community life or as a man set apart?

Survey Design

In a series of advisory committee meetings we designed the study, selected and articulated the topics to study, consulted seminary rectors and bishops, and wrote a questionnaire. As we enumerated the topics to be studied, we saw commonalities with the large 1970 survey of priests. This provided an opportunity for acquiring 20-year trend data, if identical questions could be asked and identical sampling methods used. Therefore we adopted 18 questions verbatim from the

1970 questionnaire and repeated them in 1990. (The trends are reported below.)

The questionnaire went through five revisions. Two pretests were done during 1989, and after each we made revisions.

For the diocesan sample we did not need all the dioceses but only a sample. Therefore we decided to use the 86 dioceses studied by Richard Schoenherr and Lawrence Young in their recent studies of priestly trends (Schoenherr and Young, 1990). These 86 dioceses represented all sizes of diocese and all regions in the continental 48 states. The Schoenherr-Young sample of dioceses includes a disproportionate number of large dioceses (for other reasons), requiring that the data be weighted to reinstate correct numbers from each size. Thus we used their weighting system, which does this (1990:158-9). (For the list of dioceses see Appendix A.)

Our sampling method could not include any priests who have resigned from the priesthood since ordination. Schoenherr and Young have analyzed resignation rates, finding that 9% to 10% of the diocesan and religious priests who were ordained five to nine years prior to our study have resigned. We had no way to find these men. Therefore they are not in the survey, and the reader should remember that a portion of the presumably unhappy young priests ordained five to nine years ago are absent from our data.

Data Collection

We wrote to all 86 dioceses, asking for the names and addresses of priests ordained in 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, and 1984. All cooperated and sent us lists. For the sample of religious priests we began with the 1989 directory of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men. We wrote to all 227 provinces of orders listed in the directory, asking for names and addresses. A total of 168 sent names (74%). All of the larger orders cooperated. The resulting bias is not great, since the groups we were unable to include were small.

Beginning in January 1990 we sent out questionnaires. We sent 1,477 to valid diocesan priest addresses and 965 to religious priest addresses. Priests serving overseas were included. Persons not returning questionnaires were sent a second mailing. The result was 979 completed diocesan priest questionnaires (66%) and 540 completed religious priest questionnaires (57%). Most of the questionnaires were filled out between February and May 1990.

The main discernible bias was that some priests hesitated to cooperate because they feared they might be identified later; several priests wrote us letters voicing this fear. A number of religious priests wrote to us saying that they were monks and that the questionnaire did not apply to them. Also we learned that a few priests on our lists had recently left the priesthood. Although some priests were apprehensive about the survey, the majority were not. We received several reports that dioceses or provinces had found the questionnaire useful and had used it for retreats and discussions.

By accident we received some questionnaires from priests ordained too early (1979) or too late (1985). They were not included in the sample. Also we happened to include several married former Episcopalian priests; because of their unique training and experiences we took them out of the data.

This sampling method produced representative samples of diocesan priests and religious priests, but it did not produce a correct ratio of the two. This did not matter, because we analyzed the two sets of data separately. (Based on the data of Schoenherr and Young, ordinations in 1980-84 were 72% diocesan, 28% religious.)

The questionnaires included 16 questions asking for written-in responses. To summarize all of this written material, we selected random samples of 250 diocesan questionnaires and 250 religious questionnaires, typed the actual responses in lists, and summarized them. On one question concerning favorite authors and periodicals, we tallied the responses of all the questionnaires.

By late summer 1990 the last of the questionnaires had come in.

Data analysis was done in the fall at The Catholic University of America.

CHAPTER 1

Who Are the Priests?

The priests in this study were ordained in 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, or 1984. Our sample contained roughly equal numbers from each year. The current ages of the priests are shown in Table 1.1. The overall range was 30 to 81 years, but most were 34 to 40 years old. The religious priests were slightly older than the diocesan priests due to the year or two of novitiate and formation programs required by many religious orders prior to theology.

It is well-known that seminary students today tend to be older than in decades past. This is proven by the comparison of the ages of our sample with the ages of priests five to nine years ordained in the 1970 sample. Whereas 19% of the diocesan priests and 26% of the religious in 1990 were over 40, in 1970 the figures were 6% and 20%. (Data are shown in Appendix A.)

The religious priests came from 168 orders and provinces of orders. The distribution of orders was: 16% Jesuits, 9% Franciscans, 8% Benedictines, 6% Capuchins, 5% Dominicans, 4% Franciscans (Conventuals), 3% Redemptorists, 3% Vincentians, 2% Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and 45% others.

A question asked, "Which best describes your main racial or ethnic background?" and the results are shown in Table 1.2. The largest ethnic groups are Irish and German.

Most of the priests did their theological studies in seminaries in the U.S. The seminaries most often attended, in order, were North American College, Rome, which is sponsored by the American Church (81 persons); Mount St. Marys, Emmitsburg, Md. (66 persons); Catholic Theological Union, Chicago (58 persons), and Christ the King, Buffalo, N.Y. (51 persons). A few studied in other nations. Among the diocesan priests, 2% studied outside the U.S. Among the religious priests, 6% studied in Canada and 6% studied in seminaries outside the U.S. or Canada. Two seminaries in Canada were represented—Toronto School of Theology (a federation of schools; 25 persons), and St. Paul University, Ottawa (10 persons).

The current positions held by the priests are shown in Table 1.3. Note that 24% of the diocesan priests are pastors—15% without additional work outside the parish and 9% with such work. The most common position of diocesan priests is associate pastor—47% (36% full-time, 11% with additional work outside the parish). For the religious priests the most common positions are educational apostolate (27%) and "other" (33%). From written-in comments we saw that the religious priests saying "other" were in very diverse positions; the most numerous were in formation work, vocations work, full-time graduate studies, campus ministry, retreat work, and administrative jobs for the order.

In the 1970 sample, the current positions of the priests five to nine years ordained were a bit different in that fewer were pastors (9% of the diocesan and 8% of the religious, compared with 24% and 11% in 1990). In 1970 a typical priest had to wait much longer for a pastorate.

These priests are mostly in their second, third, or fourth position since ordination. The number of transfers they have had, requiring a change of residence, is shown in Table 1.4.

The priests have spent numerous years in seminary colleges and other preparation programs before beginning theological studies. See Table 1.5. Seventeen percent of the diocesan priests and 24% of the religious priests had received a year or more of pretheology training. Also 93% of the religious priests

had had a year or more of novitiate before beginning the theologate. A majority of these priests had attended college seminaries—61% of the diocesan and 52% of the religious.

The "formation programs" reported in Table 1.5 are for discerning and clarifying vocational commitment; typically they occur alongside academic seminary work. Formation programs are most commonly sponsored for religious seminarians.

Two questions were about programs to assist priests after ordination. One asked, "In the seminary were you part of a formal transition program, i.e., a program aimed at preparing you for your first assignment (e.g., a mentor program)?" Thirty-three percent of the diocesan priests and 26% of the religious priests said yes. The second asked, "Did you ever participate in a formal program that mentored you and helped you in your role as an associate pastor?" Thirty-one percent of the diocesan priests and 24% of the religious priests said yes. These two questions ask about different programs which in reality are often the same. The great majority of seminary programs preparing students for priestly life extend over the last

TABLE 1.1 Age of Priests in the Sample (Percents)

	Diocesan (N = 978)	*Religious (N = 540)**
34 or younger	26	8
35-36	32	24
37-38	14	26
39-40	9	16
41-50	14	22
51 or older	5	4
	100	100

*N indicates the number of persons answering the question. In all surveys, there are some respondents who leave items blank. Following normal scientific practice, the cases with mission data are excluded before percentaging. In the following tables, N is not shown unless it departs markedly from the total number in the sample—979 diocesan and 540 religious priests.

TABLE 1.2 Which Best Describes Your Main Racial or Ethnic Background? (Percents)

	Diocesan	*Religious*
English, Scottish, Welsh, English-Canadian	8	10
Irish	26	24
German, Austrian, Dutch, Swiss	19	20
Italian	10	10
French, French-Canadian, Belgian	8	6
Eastern European, e.g., Polish, Lithuanian, Slovak, Ukrainian, Russian, Yugoslavian	12	12
Spanish background, e.g., Puerto Rican, Mexican American, Cuban, Central or South American, Portuguese	4	5
Asian, e.g., Vietnamese	*	1
Filipino	1	*
Black American	1	1
Black African	*	*
Native American Indian or Aleut	0	*
Other	2	4
Multiple responses	10	6

*Less than one half percent

TABLE 1.3 Current Position (Percents)

	Diocesan	*Religious*
Full-time pastor without special work outside the parish	15	7
Full-time diocesan administrator	6	1
Pastor with special work outside the parish	9	4
Full-time associate pastor	36	14
Associate pastor with special work outside the parish	11	4
Educational apostolate	7	27
Hospital chaplain	2	2
Prison chaplain	*	1
Social service apostolate	0	1
Missionary apostolate	1	7
Other	13	33

*Less than one half percent

TABLE 1.4 How Many Transfers Since First Assignment Have Caused Taking Up a New Full-Time Residence (Percents)

	Diocesan	*Religious*
None	3	10
1	25	27
2	31	29
3	26	20
4	10	10
5 or more	6	4

TABLE 1.5 Before Beginning Theological Studies, How Many Years Were Spent in the Following Preparation Programs? (Percents)

		Diocesan	*Religious*
Pre-Theology	None	83	76
	One Year	13	10
	More Than One Year	4	14
Novitiate	None	94	7
	One Year	5	74
	More Than One Year	1	19
Seminary College	None	39	49
	One or Two Years	12	9
	Three or Four Years	48	41
	Five or More Years	1	2
Formation Programs	None	93	62
	One Year	2	9
	More Than One Year	6	30

TABLE 1.6 Education Since Ordination (Percents)

	Diocesan	*Religious*
Since ordination, have you engaged in full-time or part-time study at any college or university?		
Yes, full-time	13	31
Yes, part-time	30	29
No	56	39
Did you earn a degree after ordination?		
Yes, Masters Degree	24	41
Yes, Doctoral Degree	6	14

TABLE 1.7 Fields of Study of Degrees Since Ordination (Percents)

	Masters Degrees		*Doctoral Degrees*	
Number of Persons:	*Diocesan (236)*	*Religious (219)*	*Diocesan (60)*	*Religious (77)*
Theology, dogma, moral theology, ethics, liturgy, scripture (incl. M.Div.)	54	53	58	42
Spirituality	5	6	5	3
Canon law, law	15	2	14	5
Church history	0	1	2	1
Psychology, counseling, pastoral care	12	7	1	8
Languages, literature	1	4	2	8
Education or educational administration	8	11	11	5
Anthropology, sociology, political science, social work	3	6	0	12
Other (includes music, library science, business, natural science, history, public administration, etc.)	4	10	6	17

one or two years of seminary and continue for two or three years afterward. So the two questions refer to what are usually single multi-year programs.

Lastly, the questionnaire inquired about college or university study since ordination. The results are in Table 1.6. The religious priests report the most full-time study; 31% of them have engaged in it since ordination, compared with 13% of the diocesan. Also more of the religious priests have earned degrees—41% have earned masters degrees and 14% have earned doctorates. An equivalent question was asked in the 1970 survey, and at that time fewer had earned advanced degrees. In 1970 17% of the diocesan priests and 27% of the religious had earned masters degrees, compared with 24% and 41% in 1990. (See Appendix A.)

The fields of study of persons receiving degrees since ordination are outlined in Table 1.7. The vast majority received degrees in theology, scripture, liturgics, canon law, or similar ecclesiastical disciplines. The most frequent non-ecclesiastical disciplines were psychology and education; both are fields needed by Catholic institutions—for pastoral counseling and leadership of schools.

CHAPTER 2

Priestly Life Today

This chapter discusses the findings from four sets of questions about the priests' everyday lives. One asked the men about their current living situation and also about the type of living situation that would be most helpful to them. See Table 2.1. Most currently live in rectories or communities—87% of the diocesan priests and 85% of the religious. But their present living situations are not the same as these men *would like* to have. They have clear preferences: first, that if they live in rectories or communities it be in self-chosen groups, not assigned groups. This is a strong preference of diocesan priests (see the second last column in the table) and a slight preference of religious priests (see the last column). Second, some priests in both categories would prefer to live outside of rectories or communities. Now 14% of the diocesan priests live outside of rectories, but 40% would like to; 16% of religious priests live outside of communities, but 28% would like to.

How do these men typically spend their time? A set of questions asked the priests to report the proportion of time spent on eight common ministries and tasks. The results are in Table 2.2. After each item the questionnaire had numbers from 1 to 9, with 1 meaning "none" and 9 meaning "very much" time. The table shows the mean scores. It divides the diocesan priests into those serving in parishes (as pastors or associates) vs. others, and the religious priests into those serving in parishes, those serving as educators, and others. The clearest patterns in the table occur in the last five columns, which show that parish priests spend much more time than others in worship leadership and sermon preparation, while they spend less time (in the case of diocesan priests) in administrative work and education, and (in the case of religious priests) in prayer or meditation. Of course the religious priests in the educational apostolate spend immense time in education.

The last line in the table asks about "other activities or functions." Based on written-in descriptions of diocesan priests these activities are diverse and not easily summarized; they include youth work, various kinds of chaplaincy work, study, and visiting parishioners. The descriptions of religious priests most often included youth work, full-time study, chaplaincy work, and various kinds of instruction.

What religious literature do these men read, and what has the most influence on them? The questionnaire asked two questions: "What one or two persons' writings have the most influence on your priesthood?" and "What one or two periodicals that you read have the most influence on you?" The responses were written in, and we compiled lists of the authors and periodicals named by at least 10 persons. They are shown in Table 2.3. The most influential authors are Karl Rahner, Henri Nouwen, and Thomas Merton. The most influential periodicals are *America*, *National Catholic Reporter*, and *The Priest*.

The frequency of these priests' devotional and spiritual practices is shown in Table 2.4. Most of the priests celebrate Mass daily—62% of the diocesan and 51% of the religious. The percent who recite the Breviary daily for all or some of the Hours is slightly lower—38% of the diocesan and 52% of the religious. Typically they receive the sacrament of penance every couple of months, they read the Bible outside of the liturgy or Divine Office several times a week or once a week, and they read books on spirituality about once a week. They meet with a spiritual director typically once every few months, they get together with other

priests once a month or less, and they make private days of renewal several times a year.

Three of the questions in Table 2.4 were asked in the 1970 survey, so we can look at 20-year trends. (We weighted the 1990 data for these comparisons, up-weighting the younger priests and down-weighting the older ones so that the age distribution would match the 1970 sample.) Frequency of celebrating Mass declined a bit from 1970 to 1990, especially among religious priests. Use of the Breviary and frequency of Bible reading increased. (For the data see Appendix A.)

TABLE 2.1 What Type of Living Situation Do You Presently Have? What Type Would Best Help You in Your Priestly Work? (Percents)

	Now Have		*Would Best Help Me in Priestly Work*	
	Diocesan	*Religious*	*Diocesan*	*Religious*
An assigned group in a rectory or community	59	67	14	31
A self-chosen group in a rectory or community	6	13	37	40
A self-chosen group living outside a rectory or community	1	3	21	17
Alone in a rectory	22	5	10	2
Alone outside of a rectory	7	4	14	3
Other	6	9	5	8
	101	101	101	101

TABLE 2.2 How Much Time Do You Spend on These Ministries? 1 = None; 9 = Very Much (Mean Scores)

			Diocesan		*Religious*		
No. of Cases:	*All Diocesan (972)*	*All Religious (537)*	*Pastor or Assoc. (688)*	*Other (281)*	*Pastor or Assoc. (153)*	*Educator (148)*	*Other (236)*
Worship leadership, e.g., Sunday worship, funerals, weddings	6.76	5.44	7.29	5.46	7.17	4.82	4.69
Sermon preparation	5.86	5.45	6.03	5.43	5.91	5.18	5.32
Administrative work	5.25	5.34	5.08	5.65	—	—	—
Other leadership, e.g., community affairs, guiding, directing or setting example	5.40	5.63	—	—*	—	—	—
Counseling, e.g., discussing personal concerns with other persons	5.73	5.75	—	—	—	—	—
Educating, e.g., instructing (formally or informally), providing information	6.21	6.16	6.12	6.44	5.80	7.90	5.30
Personal prayer or meditation	5.12	5.36	—	—	5.11	5.26	5.29
Other activity or function that makes up a significant part of your ministry	6.36	6.75	6.11	6.96	—	—	—

*Breakdowns are shown only if significant differences exist (at .05 significance level).

TABLE 2.3 Authors and Periodicals With the Most Influence (How Often Mentioned)

Authors		*Periodicals*
278 Rahner, Karl	20 St. John of the Cross	234 America
208 Nouwen, Henri	20 Groeschel, Benedict	174 National Catholic Reporter
154 Merton, Thomas	20 Bausch, William	149 The Priest
72 Brown, Raymond	19 Greeley, Andrew	109 Origins
64 Schillebeeckx, Edward	19 Ratzinger, Joseph	89 Church
55 Dulles, Avery	19 Carretto, Carlo	80 Theological Studies
53 Pope John Paul II	18 Burghardt, Walter	76 Human Development
43 Lewis, C.S.	17 Van Kaam, Adrian	65 US Catholic
37 McBrien, Richard	17 Urs Von Balthasar, Hans	64 Worship
33 DeMello, Anthony	16 Haring, Bernard	59 Chicago Studies
33 St. Augustine	15 Lonergan, Bernard	51 Review for Religious
30 Shea, John	15 Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre	47 30 Days
29 Sheen, Fulton	15 Clark, Steve	40 Sojourners
28 Boff, Leonardo	14 St. Ignatius of Loyola	37 Commonweal
28 Green, Thomas	13 Day, Dorothy	33 Time Magazine
27 Gutierrez, Gustavo	13 Jung, Karl	32 Liturgy
27 Rohr, Richard	12 Kennedy, Eugene	24 Homiletic and Pastoral Review
27 Peck, Scott	12 Champlin, Joseph	21 Communio
27 Powell, John	12 Pennington, Basil	20 Modern Liturgy
27 Fox, Matthew	11 Kavanagh, Aidan	18 Spiritual Life
25 Curran, Charles	11 Bradshaw, John	18 Newsweek
23 St. Thomas Aquinas	10 Maloney, George	17 Bible Today
23 St. Francis of Assisi	10 Duffy, Regis	17 Today's Parish
22 Newman, John Henry	10 St. Francis De Sales	17 London Tablet
22 Kung, Hans	10 Kasper, Walter	13 Crisis
21 St. Teresa of Avila		12 Emmanuel
		12 New Covenant
		12 St. Anthony Messenger
		12 Catechumenate
		11 Theology Digest
		11 Parish Life
		11 L'Osservatore Romano
		10 National Catholic Register
		10 New Theology Review

19

TABLE 2.4 Frequency of Practices (Percents)

	Diocesan	*Religious*
How often do you *usually* celebrate Mass each week?		
More than once a day	14	8
Usually every day	48	43
5-6 times a week	29	20
Less than 5 times a week	10	29
How frequently do you recite the Breviary?		
Daily for all of the Hours	13	12
Daily for some of the Hours	25	40
All or some of the Hours several times a week or several times a month	36	29
Not at all	10	6
I substitute another spiritual exercise	16	14
How frequently do you receive the sacrament of penance?		
On a weekly basis	5	2
On a monthly basis	19	19
Every couple of months	33	35
Once or twice a year	40	38
Never	4	6
How often do you read the Bible outside of the context of the liturgy and the Divine Office?		
Every day	13	14
Several times a week	32	37
About once a week	25	22
About once a month	11	12
Once every few months, or less	19	15
How often do you read books on spirituality?		
Every day	9	12
Several times a week	23	30
About once a week	19	17
About once a month	19	16
Once every few months, or less	31	24
How often do you meet with a spiritual director?		
Once a week or more	3	4
About once a month	28	37
Once every few months	27	22
Only on very special occasions	20	17
Never, or so rarely it shouldn't count	22	20
How often do you get together with priests, e.g., in renewal days or support groups?		
Once a week or more	13	14
About once a month	37	23
Once every few months	20	23
Only on very special occasions	20	24
Never, or so rarely it shouldn't count	11	16
How often do you make private days of renewal?		
Once a week or more	1	2
About once a month	8	17
Once every few months	39	35
Only on very special occasions	35	31
Never, or so rarely it shouldn't count	18	15

CHAPTER 3

Attitudes Toward Seminary and the Transition to Priesthood

A major objective of this survey was to get the priests' evaluations of their experiences in seminary and after ordination. Here we first review their attitudes about seminary, then their attitudes about post-ordination experiences.

Attitudes Toward Seminary

A series of 14 questions asked how well the priests' theologate had prepared them in various areas. See Table 3.1, which lists the 14 areas in descending order. These priests feel very well prepared in scripture, sacramental theology, and systematic theology. They feel fairly well prepared in related areas, including liturgy, homiletics, moral theology, and pastoral care. But they feel poorly prepared in church administration and somewhat poorly prepared in the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults).

A separate question asked about seminary preparation for the sacrament of reconciliation; it was added to the study due to current interest in the topic. See Table 3.2. The priests feel well prepared, and the religious priests feel better prepared than the diocesan; 50% of the religious priests and 35% of the diocesan said that the seminary had prepared them "very well." (In comparing numbers we use a conservative rule that differences need to be 10 percentage points to be significant and noteworthy.)

The questionnaire included two open-ended questions about academic courses:

> "Which two courses (seminary or non-seminary) have proven to be the most helpful in your priestly ministry?" "Which two courses (seminary or non-seminary) have proven to be the most helpful in your personal development?"

In the written-in answers to the first question, courses in scripture and pastoral counseling were mentioned the most. Courses in preaching were third, named somewhat less. Fourth, fifth, and sixth (much less frequently named) were courses in liturgy, moral theology, and sacramental theology. In the written-in answers to the second question, three kinds of courses predominated—scripture, pastoral counseling (including clinical pastoral training), and spirituality.

Next a 12-part question asked about training in specific skills and abilities. It asked how well the priest was formally prepared in each area prior to ordination and whether he has made any effort to acquire the skill later. See Table 3.3. The priests felt the most prepared in "self-discipline needed to accomplish work," "working with women," and "affirming people." They felt the least prepared in working with Afro-Americans, working with other ethnic groups, working with Hispanics, and conducting meetings. In all 12 parts of the question, the religious priests reported more formal preparation than did the diocesan priests; either the religious priests had a more positive attitude toward their training or they have actually received better training in these practical skills.

Has anyone made efforts to acquire these skills after ordination? The question was asked in a vague way, but we can conclude that yes, the priests have definitely made efforts to improve their abilities, especially on leadership skills such as working with lay staff, working with women, affirming people, planning and decision-making, and conflict resolution. These topics seems to be the ones on which the priests feel the most need. Diocesan and religious priests have made similar amounts of effort.

One question asked specifically about field education, and the results are shown in Table 3.4. It asked

how well the field education carried over into the priest's ministry. Almost all of the priests had had field education in seminary, and by far the majority said it has been "very helpful" or "somewhat helpful." Only 17% of the diocesan priests and 10% of the religious priests said that field education has been of little or no help. The ratings given by religious priests were more positive than those given by diocesan priests.

Respondents who said that field education had been very helpful or somewhat helpful were asked to tell why. The comments often included the words "variety," "different," and "range." Field experience had broadened the seminary students' perceptions. They had learned about the great diversity of apostolates, life issues, theological views, ministerial settings, styles and types of ministry, and ministerial opportunities. They said that field education had taught them accountability, evaluation, and how to integrate theology with praxis. Many pointed to a good supervisor as pivotal to a helpful field education experience, partly because of systematic feedback sessions.

Four Open-Ended Queries About Seminaries

Here we review the ideas written in on four open-ended questions about seminaries.

TABLE 3.1 How Well Did Your Theologate Prepare You in the Following Areas? (Percent Saying "Very Well" or "Well")*

	Diocesan	*Religious*
Scripture	93	94
Sacramental theology	89	91
Systematic theology	86	90
Liturgy	81	85
Homiletics	81	83
Church history	78	82
Moral theology	77	83
Spirituality	73	75
Pastoral care and counseling	70	81
Social and medical ethics	67	66
Catechesis	60	58
Spiritual direction	51	54
R C I A	34	33
Church administration	11	12

*The four possible responses were "Very well," "Well," "Not very well," and "Not at all." The areas are listed here in descending order.

Should seminaries include students other than ordination candidates in their classes? An open-ended question asked about this, and the results are summarized in Table 3.5. The majority believe that non-ordination students should be present in the seminaries, and the religious priests are more in favor than the diocesan. A number of priests said they favored the idea but with reservations; the three most common reservations were: (1) Sometimes classes which include non-ordination students water down the intellectual level of theology. (2) An impression is sometimes given that seminarians are no different from the laity. (3) Seminarians need a certain amount of time away together to encourage priestly bonding.

Next, a two-part question asked about the greatest challenge to the church:

> "What is the greatest challenge facing the church in the next five to 10 years?"
> "How could the seminary prepare students for this challenge?"

The main three responses to the first part were: (1) the need for a stronger evangelization, (2) the priest shortage, and (3) working more closely with the laity. The specific comments varied greatly, but we identified 10 needs:

- Greater clarity and boldness about what we teach.
- Going after inactive Catholics.
- Building community in future large parishes caused by fewer priests.
- Awakening the laity to a sense of ministry.
- Achieving better Catholic identity.
- Working to counter moral decline.
- Redoing failing catechesis.
- Defining priesthood and church for a technological age.
- Improving the religious education of youth.
- Overcoming a declining interest in the church.

TABLE 3.2 How Well Did the Seminary Prepare You to Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation? (Percents)

	Diocesan	*Religious*
Very Well	35	50
Somewhat well	45	36
Not very well	17	13
Not at all	3	1

How could the seminary prepare students for these challenges? The answers given were lengthy, but they can be summarized in two main overall themes. The main one was that seminaries need to encourage creativity, collaboration and empowering skills, and exposure to the real world. Several of the priests urging this were concerned that some seminarians are too clerical, careerist, authoritative, or doctrinaire. A second overall theme was much different; a smaller number of priests were in favor of "solid spirituality," more emphasis on academics rather than field work, orthodoxy, and stricter standards. Apparently two quite contradictory visions of seminary training exist among the priests in the survey.

A specific open-ended question asked, "What could the seminary do to prepare men more ade-

TABLE 3.3 Training Prior to Ordination and Efforts to Acquire Skills Later

How well were you formally prepared in the following areas prior to ordination? (Percent saying "Very well" or "Well")
Since ordination have you made any effort to acquire the following skills? (Percent saying "Yes")

	Formally Prepared Very Well or Well		*Effort Since*	
	Diocesan	*Religious*	*Diocesan*	*Religious*
Self-discipline needed to accomplish work	73	78	78	81
Planning and decision-making	43	52	88	86
Conflict resolution	36	45	84	80
Art of conducting meetings	28	32	81	75
Using social analysis to understand the parish or ministerial setting	33	43	59	59
Understanding the secular political forces that influence your work	31	46	65	70
Affirming people	60	74	90	88
Working with women	61	74	90	89
Working with lay staff	55	67	91	90
Working with Hispanics	27	30	41	47
Working with Afro-Americans	19	28	28	41
Working with other ethnic or racial groups	20	32	41	50

TABLE 3.4 How Well Did the Field Education in the Seminary Carry Over Into Your Ministry? (Percents)

	Diocesan	*Religious*
It has been very helpful in meeting the challenges of my ministry	35	45
It has been somewhat helpful in meeting the challenges of my ministry	43	41
It was of little help	14	9
It was of no help	3	1
I really don't know	5	2
I did not have field training	1	3
	101	101

TABLE 3.5 Attitudes About Non-Priesthood Candidates in Seminaries (Approximate Percents)

How do you feel about candidates for the priesthood being educated alongside those preparing for non-ordained service to the church? (Summary of 500 open-ended replies; approximate percents of those responding)

	Diocesan	*Religious*
Agree	48	69
Agree with reservations	27	19
Don't know, or neutral	12	9
Disagree with reservations	3	2
Disagree	10	2

quately for the celibate life?" Not everyone had a suggestion here; many said they didn't know. But five main themes occurred—listed here roughly in order of prominence: (1) Most important, seminaries need to be more open, honest, realistic, and direct on the topic of celibacy. The priests feel that celibacy was not talked about enough. (2) Some respondents recommended that seminarians be encouraged and tested on their relationship skills, including intimacy with priests and with women. Also some recommended having women teach in the seminary. (3) A few recommended that celibacy be presented as a "gift," something positive and respected, rather than an obligation or discipline. (4) A few recommended that the whole person, not just celibacy, be developed. (5) A few recommended emphasis on prayer as a way of being intimate with God and better understanding celibacy as the gift priests give to God.

Lastly, the questionnaire posed a general question:

> "If you were invited back to your seminary to give a talk titled 'What I wish I knew before I was ordained,' what would be your two key points?"

The responses given to this were very detailed. They had four principal themes of roughly equal importance, each of which was elaborated: (1) The priests wish they had been better prepared for coping with rectory living. (2) They wish they had been better prepared in prayer life. (3) They wish they had been more able to stay flexible. (4) They wish they had been more able to serve people. Specific ideas were given for each.

On the topic of rectory living, the priests made these suggestions:

- Expect to find priests and pastors who are less than a model for you; learn to deal with them.
- Remember the age gaps between young and old priests; you may be working with 1940s and 1950s priests.
- Expect to live with unhappy men at times.
- Remember that community in seminary life cannot be reduplicated in a rectory.
- Though you live in a rectory, remember you are not married to it. Always take your day off, and insist on a clear separation between work and time off.
- Strive to keep a balance between working in a rectory and living in it as a home.

Under the theme of needing better prayer life, the priests mentioned many specific points:

- Have confidence in God and sense Him in your ministry.
- Have a spiritual director.
- Recommit yourself daily.
- Learn to pray with the laity.
- Remember, only you are responsible for your prayer life.
- Grow through the sacrament of penance.
- Strive to understand better who God is, because spirituality dries up quickly.
- Your spirituality must be adjusted to you, not modeled on a monastic model.
- You need self-discipline in prayer and time management.
- Seize the contemplative moment in the midst of busy life.
- Recall frequently that priesthood is a gift from God.

Under the theme of flexibility, the priests said the following:

- Don't take life too seriously.
- Avoid the Messiah complex, being everything to everybody.
- Develop habits of discipline, a healthy lifestyle, and recreation.
- Learn to say no and avoid the sense that being a priest means doing it all.
- Expect the unexpected most of the time.
- Remember that burnout comes quickly.

Under the theme of serving the people, the following ideas were mentioned:

- Listen to the people and trust them.
- Homily preparation is very important; you must have something intelligent to say.
- Be prepared to deal with low faith commitment and low catechetical understanding.
- Never forget that you are expected to put others in contact with God and grace.
- Know that you are called to proclaim justice.
- Know the key elements of pastoral counseling.
- Remember that people want honesty.
- Build life-giving relationships.

Evaluation of the Transition to Priesthood

A question asked if the priest's first assignment was helpful or unhelpful, and the results are shown in Table 3.6. For the majority the first assignments were "very helpful" or "helpful." However for a few the first assignments were judged to be detrimental, especially among diocesan priests.

TABLE 3.6 Rating of First Assignment (Percents)

How would you rate your first assignment after ordination in terms of its helping you make the transition from the seminary to priestly ministry?

	Diocesan	*Religious*
Very helpful	39	41
Helpful	24	28
Not too helpful	20	23
Detrimental	17	8
	100	100

We asked the priests why the first assignment was helpful or not helpful, and they wrote in numerous reasons. The priests who said their first assignment was helpful stressed mostly the pastor and secondarily the parish as a whole. About the pastor the most common comment was that he was excellent and helpful. Specifically:

- The pastor was a good listener and teacher, patient and caring.
- The pastor treated the new priest with dignity and ministerial equality; he shared his ministry with him.
- The pastor encouraged and affirmed the new priest.
- The pastor had good practical sense, he was pastoral, and he worked hard.
- The pastor was receptive to innovation, flexible, and committed to the spirit of Vatican II.
- The pastor was fun to live with, conscientious, and generous.
- The pastor gave great feedback.

A smaller number wrote of the parish as a whole, citing the support they received from the parish council, parish staff, and parishioners. Some said that the parish was a blend of theory and praxis at its best.

On the other hand, priests who had experienced a bad first assignment tended to cite the pastor as the reason. Their comments could be summarized as follows:

- The pastor did not want a newly ordained associate.
- The pastor was non-communicative.
- The pastor was an autocrat.
- The pastor was totally non-directive or a weak leader.
- The pastor had poor ecclesiology.
- The pastor felt the new priest was competition to him.

Several priests mentioned problems of living with an alcoholic pastor or a pastor whose personality was dysfunctional.

An open-ended question asked, "Could the seminary have been of more assistance in your transition from the seminary itself to full-time ministry? If yes, how?" Most of the priests said yes. The most common suggestion was for mentoring programs and much more time to reflect on a pastoral experience. Respondents mentioned these specific ideas:

- Spend much more time in seminary reflecting on field experiences and internships.
- Seminary professors should have more pastoral experience.
- There should be a mentoring program, and existing mentoring programs should be stronger.
- There should be internship programs and much more parish experience before ordination.
- An ongoing support system should be set up and continued after ordination.
- Seminary living should be adjusted to reflect the real living situation a priest will experience.
- There should be more practical discussions during seminary; pastors and associates should be brought in to tell their story.

Differences in Attitudes By Age

Do younger and older priests have different evaluations of their seminary experiences? As noted earlier, 5% of the diocesan priests and 4% of the religious priests were 51 or older; 19% of the diocesan priests and 26% of the religious priests were 41 or older. To check for age differences we categorized the priests into four age groups (35 or younger; 36-40; 41-50; and 51 or older) and looked for differences in attitudes. (Differences needed to be 10 percentage points to be noteworthy here.) Only a few appeared; on most of the questions the age groups were the same.

On the 15 specific theological areas outlined in Tables 3.1 and 3.2, there were no differences in ratings by the diocesan priests, but the older religious priests gave more positive ratings to their seminary training in moral theology, and the older diocesan priests gave better ratings to their preparation for the sacrament of reconciliation. On the specific skills enumerated in Table 3.3, the diocesan priests' ratings did not vary by age, but the religious priests' ratings on three topics had a curious pattern. On how well they were trained in self-discipline, in conflict resolution, and in using social analysis to understand their ministerial setting,

the religious priests 41 to 50 years old gave poorer ratings to their seminaries than the others. Yet the priests 51 or older gave ratings similar to those 40 or younger. Why this pattern occurred is unclear.

There were no age differences on ratings of the usefulness of field education, but there was a difference among religious priests on their ratings of the helpfulness of their first assignment after ordination. The religious priests 51 years old or older were much more positive about their first assignments than the others.

In short, only a few scattered patterns occurred, and they were mainly among the religious priests.

Differences in Attitude By Current Position

Did the priests' attitudes toward their seminary experience vary according to their present position? To check, we divided them into three types of positions—parish, educational apostolate, and other (mostly administrators, chaplains, or students earning higher degrees). Of the diocesan priests, 71% were in the parish category, 7% were educators, and 22% were in other positions; of the religious the percentages were 28%, 27%, and 44%. We compared attitudes in the three categories and found few relationships. Priests' views of their seminary experience vary little according to their present jobs.

CHAPTER 4

Satisfaction with the Priesthood

Priestly satisfaction exists at two levels. Priests may be satisfied or dissatisfied with specific areas of priestly life or with priestly life in general. We set out to learn their attitudes at both levels. Here we first look at satisfaction with 10 specific areas of life, which were asked in one portion of the questionnaire. See Table 4.1. It shows the percent saying "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" in each area.

The 10 areas can be divided into three topics. On the first, "work," satisfaction is high with one's current work in ministry, but moderately low with the opportunities for continuing education. The religious priests are more satisfied with the opportunities available (65% satisfied vs. 44%). (In the table, differences need to be 10 percentage points to be reliable and noteworthy.)

On the second topic, "well-being," satisfaction is moderately high in all areas—on personal health and leisure, spiritual life, psychological well-being, and living a celibate life. Diocesan and religious priests have similar feelings. On the third topic, "relationships," satisfaction is high with respect to laity and women religious, but a bit lower with regard to fellow priests, bishops, and superiors. Apparently these priests feel they have better relationships with persons outside the church authority system. The religious priests seem to enjoy better relationships with other priests and with authorities than the diocesan priests.

Turning to general measures of satisfaction with being a priest, we show the results of three questions in Table 4.2. All three of these questions were asked in the 1970 survey, so we could look at 20-year trends.

In Table 4.2 all of the data are from priests 5 to 9 years ordained. Note that the table has six columns, of which the first and fourth present the attitudes of all priests in our 1990 survey and the second and fifth present the 1990 attitudes after weighting the data to make the ages in 1990 match those in 1970. That is, the data from older men in 1990 were downweighted and the data from younger men were upweighted to eliminate any effect of the older age distribution in 1990. The result is a more exact comparison with 1970.

All three questions in Table 4.2 concern satisfaction and morale, and on all three the levels were higher in 1990 than in 1970. This will surprise some readers who think that the American priesthood is suffering from low morale today. For whatever reason, the morale of young priests in 1990 is *higher* than it was in 1970. (See Figure 4.1, which depicts the changes.) This improvement in morale exactly matches the findings of an earlier replication of the 1970 survey done in 1985, which included priests of *all* ages (Hoge, Shields & Verdieck, 1988); it also found that morale in 1985 was higher than in 1970. Why? Possibly the resignations in the late 1980s have removed the most unhappy men from the priesthood, leaving a more contented remnant for this survey. Or possibly the year 1970 was a particularly bad one for morale. There is evidence supporting this, since 1970 was at the peak of priestly resignations in the years of post-council turbulence. In any event, we have no proof of the reason and can only speculate.

Variation in Satisfaction By Age

We related age to the measures in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. There were a few relationships with differences of over 10 percentage points, and all had the same pattern—the older priests reported higher satisfaction, with the priests over 50 reporting the highest of

all. Among the diocesan priests this occurred on the question about living a celibate life, on the question about relationships with women religious, and on whether the man would enter the priesthood again. To illustrate, 55% of the diocesan priests 40 or younger said they would definitely enter the priesthood again, compared with 61% of those 41 to 50 years old and 88% of those over 50. Among the religious priests, age differences were insignificant.

Variation in Satisfaction By Current Position

A few variations in satisfaction seem to depend on the man's current position. The clearest one is on the question asking about opportunities for continuing education. Priests in the educational apostolate, both diocesan and religious, report much more satisfaction with the opportunities than do others. Among the diocesan, 66% of those in education were very or somewhat satisfied with opportunities for continuing education, compared with 39% of those serving in parishes and 53% of those in other positions. Among religious priests the pattern was identical. Two more patterns appeared for diocesan priests: those serving in the educational apostolate are the most satisfied with their current work, and those serving in parishes are the least satisfied; the percent saying "very satisfied" was 61% for educators, 47% for parish priests, and 59% for those in other positions. And those serving in "other" positions are more satisfied with their relationship with the bishop than others; the percentage saying "very satisfied" was 66%, compared with 54% of the parish priests and 47% of the educators. In neither case was there a corresponding pattern for religious priests.

What about overall happiness, as measured in Table 4.2? It varies by type of position for only the diocesan priests. In all three measures shown in Table 4.2 the diocesan priests in the educational apostolate are the happiest and those in parish work are the least happy. For example, the percent saying they are "very happy" was 42% for the educators, 29% for the parish priests, and 39% for those in other positions. And the percent saying they are now utilizing their important skills and abilities "a great deal" was 57% for the educators, 29% for the parish priests, and 44% for those in other positions. It seems that the men serving in parishes feel somehow limited or under-utilized. Here we find the same pattern uncovered by past researchers who studied the lives of young priests. Apparently the problem still exists.

TABLE 4.1 Present Level of Satisfaction (Percent Saying "Very Satisfied" or "Somewhat Satisfied")*

	Diocesan	*Religious*
Work		
Current work in ministry	86	87
Opportunities for continuing education	44	65
Well-Being		
Personal health and leisure	67	63
Spiritual life	56	60
Psychological well-being	72	80
Sexual integration or living a celibate life	57	62
Relationships		
Relationship with fellow priests	59	72
Relationship with bishop or superior	56	68
Relationship with the laity with whom you work	91	93
Relationship with women religious with whom you work	79	81

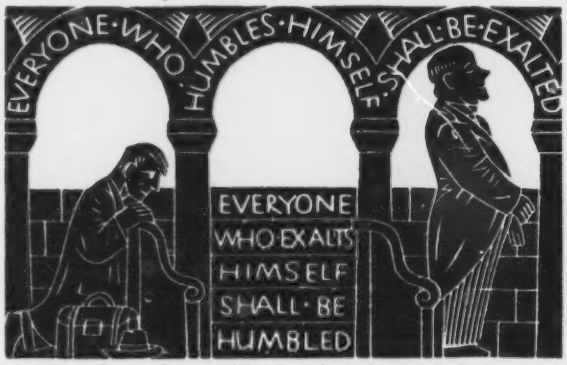
*The questionnaire had six responses ranging from "Very satisfied" to "Very dissatisfied."

TABLE 4.2 Three Measures of Satisfaction and Morale, 1970 and 1990 (Percents)

	1990		*1970*	*1990*		*1970*
	Diocesan	*Comparable Age to 1970*	*Diocesan*	*Religious*	*Comparable Age to 1970*	*Religious*
Taking things all together, how would you say things are these days—would you say you're very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?						
Very happy	32	33	23	37	36	23
Pretty happy	58	58	54	57	58	66
Not too happy	10	9	22	7	6	12
If you had your choice again, would you enter the priesthood?						
Definitely yes	57	56	35	59	60	42
Probably yes	25	25	32	28	29	34
Uncertain	12	13	17	8	7	10
Probably not	5	6	11	4	3	11
Definitely not	1	1	6	1	1	4
To what extent do you feel you are utilizing your important skills and abilities in your present assignment?						
A great deal	34	35	29	41	40	46
Fairly much	36	37	32	37	38	29
To some degree	20	20	26	16	15	20
Comparatively little	9	8	11	5	6	5
Not at all	1	1	2	1	1	0

CHAPTER 5

Priestly Identity



Seminary educators have been discussing priestly identity for years, since identity is one of the major products of seminary education. Priests in modern society need to feel certain and secure in their priesthood or they will falter in their ministry. Such a problem is what Erik Erikson called an "identity crisis," and it is a potential threat to persons in specialized roles in a time of social change. Education for the priesthood needs to forge strong priestly identity. The only education which all priests have in common is their four years in the theologate, and it must build as resilient an identity as possible. How is this best done?

The concept "identity" has two dimensions which we distinguished. The first is the one already noted, its *strength*. A priest needs to feel comfortable, confident, secure, and understood by others. The second is the specific *content* of the priestly identity. The theological understanding of the priesthood changed from the pre-Vatican II period to the recent period, and it is in flux yet today. For example, is a priest a "man set apart" or a man who enters fully into parish and community life? How different is a priest from a baptized layperson, and what does that difference entail in everyday life? Should the difference be emphasized or de-emphasized? Can a man be a true priest if he is not involved continually in sacramental ministry?

Strength of Identity

The committee writing the survey questionnaire chose to assess strength of identity by questions about "how comfortable" the priest feels. See Table 5.1, which depicts responses to 10 aspects of the priesthood. The first two columns are the percent of priests saying they are "very comfortable." Of the 10 aspects, they are most comfortable with celebrating the sacraments; the figures are 86% for the diocesan priests, 80% for the religious. They are fairly comfortable with the social justice teachings of the church, with being a public figure, with the spirituality of the priesthood, with wearing the public symbols (collar or habit), with the increase in non-ordained persons in ministry, and with the permanent diaconate—the percentages vary from 32 to 62.

The priests are *least* comfortable with the governance of the church and the moral teachings of the church. These percentages are below 30.

The rightmost two columns show the percentages saying they are very, somewhat, or slightly comfortable (as opposed to uncomfortable); they clearly show that most of the respondents are *much more* comfortable than uncomfortable in their roles. The biggest problem area appears to be the governance of the church, about which many of the respondents seem to feel insecure.

Table 5.1 has some differences between diocesan and religious priests (as before, differences of less than 10 percentage points are not reliable). The main difference is on wearing the collar or religious habit (seventh item); the diocesan priests are much more comfortable doing it than are the religious (46% vs. 33%). Also small differences occur with regard to the governance of the church (the diocesan are more comfortable), the moral teachings of the church (the diocesan are more comfortable), and the increase in non-ordained ministers (the religious are more comfortable).

How comfortable are the priests in speaking confidentially with other persons? See Table 5.2, which shows comfort with 10 categories of persons. Again there were six possible responses, and the first two

TABLE 5.1 Feeling Comfortable or Uncomfortable in the Priesthood (Percents)*

	"Very Comfortable"		"Very," "Somewhat," or "Slightly Comfortable"	
	Diocesan	*Religious*	*Diocesan*	*Religious*
As you go about your priestly ministry, how comfortable do you generally feel about the following?				
The social justice teaching of the church	45	51	89	88
The governance of the church	15	10	62	47
The moral teachings of the church	28	19	80	68
Celebrating the sacraments	86	80	99	98
Being a public figure	35	35	86	87
The spirituality of the priesthood	33	32	87	85
Symbols of affiliation, e.g., wearing the collar or religious habit	46	33	86	75
Non-ordained persons fulfilling responsibilities once reserved solely to the ordained	52	62	90	95
The permanent diaconate	41	46	79	77

*The questionnaire had six responses ranging from "Very comfortable" to "Very uncomfortable."

columns show the percent saying "very comfortable." These men are most comfortable talking openly with a close priest friend, a spiritual director, or a close layman friend. A bit lower is a close laywoman friend. These men are *least* comfortable talking about personal issues with another priest (one who is not a close friend) or with a bishop or superior.

In sum, Table 5.2 shows us that priests feel very secure with close friends and spiritual directors, but not with other priests in general and not with anyone in authority. Religious priests seem to feel more at ease with superiors than do diocesan priests with bishops; also the religious priests seem to find women religious a bit more approachable.

Content of Priestly Identity

Issues of the specific content of one's priestly identity are best studied through discrete attitude items. Table 5.3 includes eight such items, all of which were repeated from the 1970 study. The 1990 priests affirm that being a scholar, researcher, chancery official, or administrator is a valid priestly role (first two items). They are moderately certain that ordination confers on the priest a new status making him essentially different from the laity (third item), and they are emphatic that the priest is *the* man in society who proclaims God's Word and provides the sacraments. They do not suffer from feelings of uncertainty about what a priest is supposed to do (seventh item). They have mixed views about whether the priest is a "man set apart" and whether the priest is essentially a member of the bishop's team (fourth and eighth items).

The diocesan and religious priests portray somewhat different attitudes. The religious priests (a) were more supportive of non-parish jobs as being "priestly," and (b) were more critical of the idea that a priest is a "man set apart." The diocesan priests (a) believed more strongly that ordination confers on the priest a new status essentially different from the laity; (b) reported more feelings of being priestly when saying Mass and hearing confessions; and (c) stressed more than religious priests that a priest is part of the bishop's team, doing work the bishop wants. Some of these differences arise out of the disparate institutional settings of diocesan and religious priests.

The trends from 1970 to 1990 in Table 5.3 are not very distinct. The main trends are in the first and second items. The first item said that being a priest-psychologist, priest-sociologist, or priest-social worker is as priestly as working in parishes and missions. Agreement dropped 13 points among diocesan priests, eight points among religious. The second moved in the opposite direction—it said that being a chancery official, administrator of a province, or administrator of a Catholic institution is as priestly as working in parishes and missions, and agreement rose 19 points among diocesan priests, 20 points among

TABLE 5.2 How Comfortable Are You With the Following Persons When You Need a Confidant on a Personal Level? (Percents)*

	"Very Comfortable"		*"Very," "Somewhat," or "Slightly Comfortable"*	
	Diocesan	*Religious*	*Diocesan*	*Religious*
A close priest friend	77	82	97	99
Another priest, but not close friend	8	10	73	76
A layman friend	56	62	95	97
A laywoman friend	50	49	91	93
The bishop or superior	11	21	52	71
Spiritual director, be that a priest, sister or lay person	68	69	96	97
A woman religious friend	37	48	88	92
A parent	28	23	72	67
A married couple	32	29	86	86
A close relative	28	29	73	76

*The questionnaire had six responses ranging from "Very comfortable" to "Very uncomfortable."

religious. For some reason being a priest-social scientist has become less legitimate while being a church administrator has become much more legitimate. Why? One possibility is that many chancery offices have become more cooperative and less authoritarian in their dealings with priests—giving administrators more esteem in priestly eyes. Another is that priests are more concerned about the well-being of the institutional church in 1990 than they were in 1970—hence the greater acceptance of administrators. These are guesses only. For whatever reason, the priests in 1990 seem to be more supportive of fellow priests in church administration jobs.

Two more trends occurred among diocesan priests only. The diocesan priests increased their feelings that ordination confers on the priest a new and distinct status (third item), and they reduced their criticism of the concept that the priest is a "man set apart." Both are small shifts (only nine points and 12 points) in the traditional direction. Among the religious priests all the shifts were small. In sum, the trend patterns in Table 5.3 do not show any basic shifts in attitudes about the priesthood.

The 1990 questionnaire had two open-ended questions about priestly identity. First, "Considering all of the things you do, what most gives you a sense of priestly identity?" The written-in responses identified two forms of ministry. By far the most important was celebrating the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. Also mentioned, but less important, was preaching.

The second asked, "In the last year, what in your ministry has been most inspiring to you?" The responses contained three main points. Most inspiring was the faith and spirituality of the laity, especially when they face a crisis such as death or are searching for God in their lives. Second, many said that involvement in the RCIA and catechizing was inspiring. Third, a few pointed to the teaching and formation of youth. All three of these are forms of spiritual leadership and nurturance.

Specific Attitudes About Priesthood, Ministry, and Ecumenism

We were requested by seminary leaders to include a number of specific attitude items in the 1990 questionnaire. Table 5.4 shows results on eight items about the priesthood and ministry, and Table 5.5 has five items about ecumenism.

In Table 5.4 about half of these priests would be willing to attend primarily to the sacramental life and let the laity assume responsibility for other leadership functions. Over three-fourths believe there is a critical shortage of priests, and over three-fourths try to encourage vocations as much as possible. About 90% say they have no problems working side by side with sis-

TABLE 5.3 Statements About Priestly Identity (Percent Who "Agree Strongly" or "Agree Somewhat")

	1990		1970	1990		1970
	Diocesan	Comparable Age to 1970	Diocesan	Religious	Comparable Age to 1970	Religious
Being a priest-psychologist, priest-sociologist, or a priest-social worker is as priestly as working in parishes and missions.	65	66	79	79	79	87
Being a chancery official, an administrator in the province, or the administrator of a Catholic institution is as priestly as working in parishes and missions.	62	63	44	71	73	53
Ordination confers on the priest a new status or a permanent character which makes him essentially different from the laity within the church.	63	61	52	50	51	58
The idea that a priest is a "man set apart" is a barrier to the full realization of true Christian community.	37	36	48	48	48	42
Whatever else is said about the humanitarian preoccupations and interpersonal relationships of priests, we must remember that the priest is *the* man in society who proclaims God's Word and provides for sacramental encounter with God in Christ.	86	86	79	81	81	79
I feel I am most a priest when I am saying Mass and hearing confessions.	64	62	62	52	50	59
I used to think I knew what a priest was supposed to do but I really don't know any more.	19	20	26	11	11	20
As a priest, I feel that I am a member of the bishop's team. When I am doing a job that has the local bishop's approval, I am doing priestly work.	43	41	40	33	33	37

ters or permanent deacons. And two-thirds report that the bishops' pastorals have been helpful to their ministry. There are no differences between diocesan and religious priests on these topics.

In Table 5.5 the priests show support for further ecumenism. The vast majority say that ecumenical efforts are not a waste of time, and two-thirds are in favor of continuing to allow married Anglican priests to become Catholic priests (fifth item). Yet the threats to American Catholicism from other faiths are a serious concern. About a third are concerned about the increase in interfaith marriages (second item), about a third say that Catholicism is becoming less distinguishable from other denominations (third item), and the vast majority are concerned about proselytizing of Catholic immigrants by Protestant evangelicals (fourth item). There are no diocesan-religious differences.

Age Differences in Priestly Identity

We found few age differences on the measures of priestly identity. With one exception, all occur for diocesan priests only. The exception is that both older diocesan and older religious priests were more satisfied with the moral teachings of the church. Among the diocesan priests, 25% of those 35 or under, 27% of those 36-40, 33% of those 41-50, and 51% of those over 50 said they were very comfortable with the church's moral teachings; among the religious priests the percentages were 23%, 19%, 13%, and 48%. The rest of

the differences were for diocesan priests only, and they are shown in Table 5.6. They form a pattern: The older men are more in accord with all the church's teachings and more secure as priests. Table 5.6 shows that diocesan priests over 40 (and especially those over 50) are more comfortable with the church's moral teachings (first item) and more comfortable wearing the collar in public (second item). They feel, more than others, that they are part of the bishop's team (fourth item), they encourage vocations more than others (sixth item), they accept permanent deacons more than others (seventh item), and they are more concerned about interfaith marriages (fifth item).

No corresponding age patterns appeared among the religious priests except that, as already noted, the older religious priests were more comfortable with the church's moral teachings.

Differences Based on Current Position

In general priestly identity does not vary according to the priest's position. We found only a few relationships on particular measures, but no overall pattern. Two relationships occurred for both diocesan and religious priests: (1) The men serving as educators or in non-parish positions are more comfortable than parish priests with the justice teachings of the church (Table 5.1, third item). (2) The men serving as educators or in non-parish positions tend more often than parish priests to agree that being a chancery official or Catholic administrator is as priestly as working in parishes and missions (Table 5.3, second item). These attitudes are probably products of different work goals.

One relationship occurred for diocesan priests only: The diocesan priests serving in parishes are more comfortable with the permanent diaconate than others. The other occurred for religious only: The religious priests serving as educators agree *less* than others that "I feel my priesthood is highly respected by those I serve." These findings are too weak to add up to anything definite, so we conclude that current position has little effect on the priests' feelings of identity. At most it has a few effects on specific issues.

TABLE 5.4 Statements About the Priesthood (Percent Who "Agree Strongly" or "Agree Somewhat")

	Diocesan	*Religious*
I would be happy to attend primarily to the sacramental life and let the laity assume responsibility for most other functions.	52	54
I feel my priesthood is highly respected by those I serve.	88	91
I feel proud of most of the men we have as priests.	72	70
There is a critical shortage of priests.	78	75
I encourage vocations to the priesthood and religious life as much as possible.	79	84
I have no problem working side by side with sisters.	90	94
I have no problem having a permanent deacon as a co-worker.	86	87
The bishops' pastorals written for the U.S. are helpful to my priestly ministry.	62	70

TABLE 5.5 Statements About Ecumenism (Percent Who "Agree Strongly" or "Agree Somewhat")

	Diocesan	*Religious*
Ecumenism is a waste of time since we will never come to agreement on essential doctrines.	7	3
There should be concern about the increase in interfaith marriages.	39	33
Catholicism is becoming less distinguishable as a denomination from other denominations.	37	32
We shouldn't worry if some Catholic immigrants get their religion from Protestant evangelical groups, as long as they get some religion.	9	12
We should continue to allow Anglican priests, whether married or unmarried, to become Catholic priests.	66	68

TABLE 5.6 Age Differences Among Diocesan Priests on Priestly Identity Items (Percents)

	Age 35 or younger	*36-40*	*41-50*	*Age 51 or older*
As you go about your priestly ministry, how comfortable do you feel about the following? ("Very comfortable")				
The moral teachings of the church	25	27	33	51
Symbols of affiliation, e.g., wearing the collar or religious habit	43	44	49	70
Strongly agree or agree:				
Being a chancery official, an administrator in the province, or the administrator of a Catholic institution is as priestly as working in parishes and missions.	65	62	54	62
As a priest, I feel that I am a member of the bishop's team. When I am doing a job that has the local bishop's approval, I am doing priestly work.	42	40	47	60
There should be concern about the increase in interfaith marriages.	34	38	45	69
I encourage vocations to the priesthood and religious life as much as possible.	79	80	75	96
I have no problem having a permanent deacon as a co-worker.	84	85	91	95

CHAPTER 6

Preferred Priestly Roles

What are the most appropriate roles for priests today? This question troubles many priests, partly because changes in the church have blurred priestly roles. Events since the Second Vatican Council have opened new questions about priestly roles. What was formerly clear about the status and tasks of a priest became less clear after the council. Also the changing conditions in the church exert new pressures. The shortage of priests in the United States is inducing bishops to reassign their available priests to sacramental ministries. Today the average wait for a pastorate is much shorter. Lay ministers in parishes are growing in numbers and influence. In the face of these changes, what is the proper role for the priest today? Should a priest put most of his emphasis on serving the institutional church, or should he stress most of all the community of the faithful in his town or neighborhood? Should a priest enter fully into the social life of the lay community, relating to others as an equal, or should he remain set apart as an exemplar of holiness? Everyone must make choices.

The 1990 questionnaire stated, "Using the responses below, how would you rate the following for your ideal of the priesthood?" Eighteen statements followed, to be rated as "A primary ideal for me," "A strong ideal for me," "One of the least ideals for me," "Not an ideal for me," or "Not certain." The percent saying each ideal is "a primary ideal for me" or "a strong ideal for me" is shown in Table 6.1. This set of items was taken verbatim from the 1986 survey of seminarians. It was useful for understanding seminarians in 1986, and we hoped it would be useful in 1990 with young priests. The third column of Table 6.1 shows the comparable responses of seminarians in theology in 1986.

The differences between 1990 diocesan and religious priests (first and second columns) seem most attributable to their different types of ministry. Both agreed that ideals #17, #7, #3, #16, #2, and #18 are the most important. The biggest differences occurred on ideal #8 on preserving the ecclesial and social structure of the church (diocesan priests were 17 percentage points higher), on ideal #10 on being in dialogue with the world in order to enhance constructive action and harmony within it (religious priests were 17 points higher), on #6 on being an extension of the bishop and collaborating with him (diocesan priests were 15 points higher), on #11 on being a pastoral leader entrusted with the spiritual governance of the laity (diocesan priests were 15 points higher), and #13 on being a catechist (diocesan priests were 15 points higher). In general, diocesan priests are more concerned with upholding institutional church structures—as we have seen repeatedly in this study.

Probably more important are the differences between the 1990 priests and the 1986 seminarians. We compared the combined responses of diocesan and religious priests with the responses of all seminarians. The reader should remember that the priests in the present survey were ordained in 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, and 1984, while the 1984 survey (in autumn 1984) included all four years of theology students. Thus the surveys included almost the same people, but not quite; no one person could have been in both. The reader should also remember that about 9% or 10% of the ordinands have resigned from the priesthood (probably those most dissatisfied) in their first five to nine years, leaving the others to be respondents in our survey.

TABLE 6.1 Percent Saying that 18 Aspects of Priesthood Roles Are Primary or Strong Ideals of the Priesthood For Them

	1990 Priests		*1986*
	Diocesan	*Religious*	*Seminarians*
1. enabling laity to minister in areas a priest traditionally ministers.	73	82	60
2. being a representative of the Gospel's teachings which refer to the needy in our midst.	89	92	94
3. being a herald of the Word by preaching and encouraging the faithful to study and meditate on the scriptures.	95	93	95
4. being a moderator who coordinates ministry in the church.	70	62	71
5. being a sign and guarantee of eucharistic unity in the church.	79	67	82
6. being an extension of the bishop, collaborating with and helping him.	59	44	72
7. building and nurturing a community spirit in which there is a sense of belonging and mission.	97	96	97
8. preserving the ecclesial and social structure of the church through teaching and upholding the church's traditions.	61	44	66
9. being a leader of Christian worship in the community by performing liturgical rites which are exclusive to the priesthood.	77	63	73
10. being in dialogue with the world in order to enhance constructive action and harmony within it.	64	81	77
11. being a pastoral leader entrusted with the spiritual governance of the laity.	68	53	76
12. being an activist in getting the faithful to engage in issues like poverty, racism, sexism and pro-life.	53	60	51
13. being a catechist responsible for the teaching role of the community.	78	63	75
14. living celibacy as a sign of devotion to the coming of God's kingdom.	56	60	77
15. pastoring the church through the transmission of doctrinal truths.	56	42	65
16. practicing the prophetic role of the priest by interpreting God's Word for the faithful.	92	89	88
17. teaching the Gospel consciously through personal witness.	98	97	98
18. encouraging the Christian community to develop its own ministries.	88	89	84

The main differences between seminarians and young priests are shown in Table 6.2. The largest difference is that the priests put less theological value on celibacy than did the seminarians; the difference is 20 percentage points. The second largest difference is that the priests put less emphasis on their being an extension of the bishop and assisting him; the difference is 17 points. The priests gave *more* emphasis to enabling laity to minister in areas traditionally the domain of priests (15 points difference), but less on being a pastor entrusted with transmission of doctrinal truths and spiritual governance of the laity (15 points difference on each). In sum, the 1990 priests seem to put less emphasis on institutional church structures.

Two Dimensions of Priestly Roles

In our survey of seminarians in 1986, we factor-analyzed these 18 priestly ideals to discern the main dimensions underlying the responses to them. We had responses from both seminary students and seminary faculty to the 18 statements, and we made identical analyses of both sets of data. The computer identified three dimensions underlying the responses, and they

TABLE 6.2 Greatest Differences Between Seminarians and Priests (Percents)

Ideal	*1986 Seminarians*	*1990 Combined Priests*	*Difference*
14. living celibacy as a sign of devotion to the coming of God's kingdom.	77	57	-20
6. being an extension of the bishop, collaborating with and helping him.	72	55	-17
1. enabling laity to minister in areas a priest traditionally ministers.	60	75	15
15. pastoring the church through the transmission of doctrinal truths.	65	52	-13
11. being a pastoral leader entrusted with the spiritual governance of the laity.	76	64	-12

were the same for the students and the faculty. The principal dimension we called "Institutional Orientation" at one end and "Communal Orientation" at the other. The aptness of these names may be debated, since they are not given in any automatic way by the analysis; we selected them since they seemed best to summarize the items defining the dimensions. "Institutional" and "communal" are terms borrowed from Avery Dulles' concepts "institutional model" and "mystical communion model" in his book *Models of the Church*. The second dimension discovered by the computer we called "Social Leader Tendency" on one end, "Personal Witness Tendency" on the other. Again the names we chose are subject to debate. The computer identified the statements defining the social leader end, but the identity of the opposite end was less clear and had to be inferred from other statements. The third dimension was much weaker than the others, and for our purposes it is unimportant. Its high end might be called "Teacher," since it was defined by three statements on teaching the Gospel and interpreting God's Word for the faithful (#17, #3, and #16). Since opinions did not differ on the importance of this dimension, it was not useful.

This left two principal dimensions on which priestly role ideals varied, and we constructed scores for measuring each person on each. Our major findings were that diocesan students gave more emphasis to the "Institutional Orientation," while religious students gave more to the "Communal Orientation." Also the faculty were stronger on the "Communal Orientation" than the students. Students of different ages differed little among themselves.

In the present study we again factor-analyzed the 18 statements to see which dimensions underlay the responses. The result was similar to the earlier outcome. (The factor loadings are shown in Appendix A.) Therefore we proceeded to construct measures of the two principal dimensions.

The main dimension was "Institutional Orientation" vs. "Communal Orientation," and it was defined by responses to eight of the statements:

> #8. "Preserving the ecclesial and social structure of the church through teaching and upholding the church's traditions."
>
> #15. "Pastoring the church through the transmission of doctrinal truths."
>
> #6. "Being an extension of the bishop, collaborating with and helping him."
>
> #9. "Being a leader of Christian worship in the community by performing liturgical rites which are exclusive to the priesthood."
>
> #14. "Living celibacy as a sign of devotion to the coming of God's kingdom."
>
> #11. "Being a pastoral leader entrusted with the spiritual governance of the laity."
>
> #5. "Being a sign and guarantee of eucharistic unity in the church."
>
> #13. "Being a catechist responsible for the teaching role of the community."

Persons who scored these statements as highest ideals think of the priesthood mostly in terms of its function in the institutional church. They hold to teachings about the priest as an official of the church, upholding its authority and maintaining its institu-

tional identity. By contrast, persons scoring these statements low are at the communal end of this dimension and think of the priesthood in terms of the local People of God and spiritual leadership in that setting. To construct the measure of this dimension, the responses to the statements were scored from 5 to 1 (primary ideal = 5; strong ideal = 4; not certain = 3; one of the least ideals = 2; not an ideal = 1) and the mean was found. A high score indicates a predominantly institutional orientation. In 1986 the student mean was 3.92 and the faculty mean was 3.69. In 1990 the priests' mean was 3.63, indicating a shift toward the communal orientation, so that the 1990 priests' views were similar to those of the seminary faculty.

The second dimension, "Social Leader Tendency" vs. "Personal Witness Tendency," was defined by responses to five statements stating the social leader pole:

> #12. "Being an activist in getting the faithful to engage in issues like poverty, racism, sexism, and pro-life."
>
> #10. "Being in dialogue with the world in order to enhance constructive action and harmony within it."
>
> #4. "Being a moderator who coordinates ministry in the church."
>
> #1. "Enabling laity to minister in areas a priest traditionally ministers."
>
> #18. "Encouraging the Christian community to develop its own ministries."

The measure of this dimension was the mean of responses to these items. In 1986 the mean for seminary students was 3.76, and the mean for seminary faculty happened to be the same—3.76. In 1990 the mean for the priests was 3.81. Opinions had changed little since seminary days.

Plotting Priestly Roles in Two-Dimensional Space

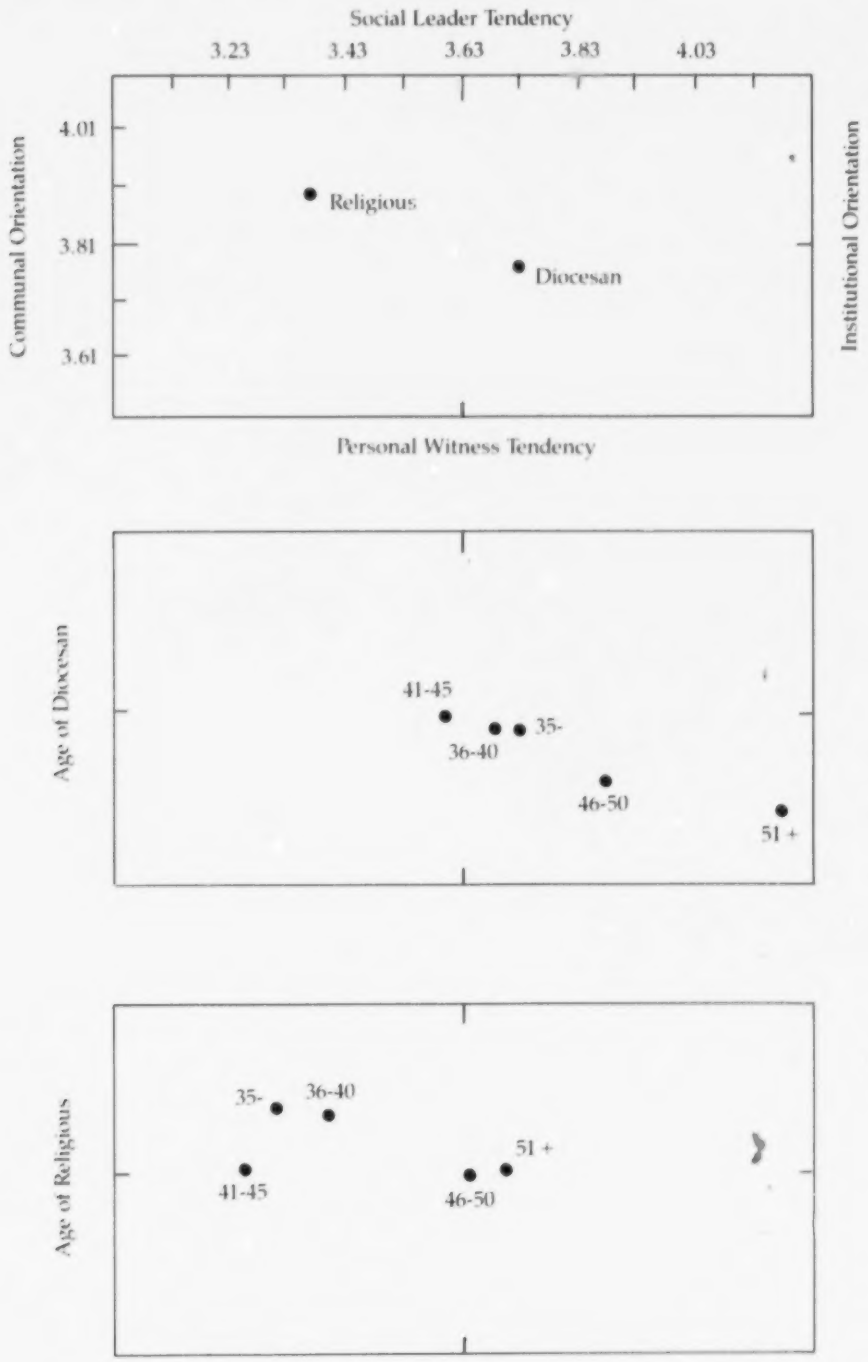
Figure 6.1 depicts the two-dimensional space defined by the two dimensions of priestly roles. Each figure is centered on the mean of the horizontal Dimension I (3.63) and the mean of the vertical Dimension II (3.81). The top of Figure 6.1 shows the comparison of diocesan and religious priests, with the diocesan considerably nearer the institutional orientation than the religious. The vertical difference is small.

The middle and lower part of the figure depict age differences. The diocesan priests (in the middle) are arrayed nearer the right side, since they tend, in general, toward the institutional orientation. Note the large age differences, with the men over age 50 quite a bit closer to the institutional orientation. The age differences do not begin until age 45; younger priests are similar to each other regardless of age. At the bottom of the figure, the age differences among religious priests are similar, with men over 45 quite a bit nearer the institutional orientation. These age differences show that the older priests somewhat more than others see their roles as being defined by the needs and functions of the institutional church. This is an important finding of our survey.

Such large age differences did not appear in the 1986 seminary survey, even though the 1986 survey asked identical questions. We looked for age differences in 1986 but found none. Why do they occur here and not earlier? The reason is not at all clear. Possibly it is because these priests surveyed in 1990 are slightly older, on average; they were ordained in 1980 to 1984, while the 1986 seminarian survey included men ordained later. This is a possible explanation, but not very likely, for what difference would two or three years make? Possibly the resignation of 9% to 10% of the priests since ordination has altered the sample in some way; but this is also not very convincing, since we know that the resignees tend to be young priests with post-Vatican II religious outlooks. The inclusion of more of that type in the 1990 sample would make the age gap larger, not smaller; it would not explain the gap. We don't know the explanation.

We also tried plots to depict differences among priests in different current positions, and differences among priests who attended different types of seminaries (more on this later). We found no patterns for the diocesan priests, but we did find some differences among religious priests depending on their current type of ministry and on the type of seminary they attended. We will discuss them in Chapter 7.

FIGURE 6.1 Two-Dimensional Field Depicting Attitudes About Priestly Roles



CHAPTER 7

The Effect of Programs

A principal goal of this survey was to assess the impact of the college seminary, theological seminary, and special programs during and after seminary. Today there is much discussion about types of seminary and special programs, and advocates for one or another assert that they have a special beneficial impact.

A survey such as ours has some ability to evaluate those claims, yet it is limited due to the paucity of controls. That is, even though we may find, for example, that graduates of theologate Type A differ from graduates of theologate Type B, we cannot conclude that the differences are due to the *effect* of A as opposed to B. The differences could be caused by other factors, and unless the other factors are eliminated as possibilities through experimental or statistical controls, no definite conclusion can be drawn. A major problem is controlling for "selection factors"—that is, what kinds of students select Type A or Type B. Selection factors may account for any differences found among the priests today.

In survey research the needed controls for eliminating selection factors are seldom available, and in our survey this is again the case. Therefore only tentative statements can be made about the probable impacts of one seminary, or one program, vs. another. We proceeded in the data analysis as best we could, and here we will label all conclusions as to their reliability.

Effects of Age and Ethnicity

In earlier chapters we reported on associations between age and various measures of priestly satisfaction, identity, and roles. Our strongest findings were in Chapter 6, where the older priests were found to be more committed to the institutional orientation in priestly roles. Elsewhere we found a few scattered indications that older priests had higher morale and rated their training more positively.

We also looked at the impact of ethnicity on the priests' attitudes. It is safe to say that whether the priests are of Irish, German, Eastern European, Hispanic, or some other ethnic background, this has little impact on their attitudes. We could not look at every single ethnic group, but we compared the main ones.

The rest of this chapter discusses findings regarding four main programs and experiences—college seminary, type of theologate, mentoring programs after ordination, and first assignments.

Effect of College Seminary

As noted in Chapter 1, 61% of the diocesan priests and 51% of the religious priests had attended at least one year of college seminary. Are the priests who attended one or more years of college seminary different today from other priests? We compared the two groups on 78 attitudes and found only a few scattered relationships.

The reader should be reminded that statistical relationships are subject to "random fluctuation," and that randomness in the sampling process will produce a few "false positives" in the tables. Therefore the data analyst cannot put much credence in scattered relationships which show up, unless they form some consistent and interpretable pattern. Therefore we view the following findings regarding college seminary with circumspection. Here they are:

(1) The most persuasive finding stems from the question about how well the priest's formal training prepared him in various areas. The priests who at-

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tended college seminary more often said that they were well prepared in "self-discipline needed to accomplish work." Among the diocesan priests 77% who attended a college seminary said this, vs. 67% of the others. Among the religious priests, 83% who attended a college seminary said this, vs. 74% of the others. This is a weak relationship, but it is consistent in both groups.

The other relationships are more random. (2) On one attitude item regarding priestly identity, more of the religious priests who attended college seminary agreed that "ordination confers on the priest a new status or a permanent character which makes him essentially different from the laity within the church" (57% of those who attended a college seminary, 42% of the others). (3) On the question asking how happy the priests are now, more of the religious priests who attended college seminary said they were unhappy than the others (the percentage saying "very happy" was 32% for the college seminary group, 42% for the others). (4) On the question asking if the priests are utilizing their important skills and abilities in their present assignments, the diocesan priests who attended college seminary more often said "a great deal" or "fairly much" (75% vs. 64% of the others).

These dispersed relationships do not seem to add up to anything. Most are weak, and they form no definite pattern. The most defensible conclusion we can state is that having attended college seminary has very little effect on these priests now.

Effect of Type of Theologate

Catholic theological seminaries in the U.S. vary in structure, program, and emphasis. We asked all the priests in the survey from which major seminary (theologate) they were ordained, then we categorized the seminaries into four groups, following the outline by Katarina Schuth in *Reasons for the Hope* (1989:223-226). The four were free-standing seminaries, university-related seminaries, collaborative seminaries, and seminaries outside the U.S. The free-standing seminaries are independent institutions offering the total theological and formation program, usually in a setting away from a city or university campus. The university-related seminaries are located on or near Catholic universities; they utilize the university classes for the academic course work and carry out formation programs in their own houses. The collaborative seminaries are clusters of theological schools and houses of formation, often sharing an academic program and serving a diverse student body. Of the 58 U.S. seminaries attended by members of our sample, 36 were free-standing, 12 were university-related, and 10 were collaborative. (See Appendix A for a list of the seminaries.)

The diocesan priests in our sample attended the following seminaries: 73% free-standing, 23% university-related, 2% collaborative, and 2% outside the U.S. The religious priests attended the following: 31% free-standing, 9% university-related, 49% collaborative, and 11% outside the U.S. For purposes of analysis, we deleted all the priests educated outside the U.S. (but not those who attended American-sponsored seminaries in Louvain and Rome). Also we deleted the small number of diocesan priests who had attended collaborative seminaries in the U.S.; the cases were too few for analysis. This left us with two types of seminaries among the diocesan priests and three among the religious.

Are these priests different in evaluation of their training, satisfaction, priestly identity, or preferred roles? For the diocesan priests the answer is no. We compared the two groups on 78 variables and found only four significant relationships. They are probably a product of random fluctuation, not any definite pattern in the data. Thus we find no support for statements about the purported advantages of free-standing vs. university-related seminaries regarding priestly identity or roles.

How about the religious priests? Yes, they do differ by type of seminary. We found 15 relationships which formed two distinct patterns. (The data are in Appendix A.) (1) Priests who graduated from collaborative seminaries felt they were the best prepared for celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation, affirming people, understanding secular political forces, working with women, working with lay staff, and working with Afro-Americans. They were also the most satisfied with their relationships with women religious. (2) Priests who graduated from free-standing seminaries reported the most reading of spiritual books, and they felt the most comfortable with the governance of the church, the moral teachings of the church, the spirituality of the priesthood, and the permanent diaconate. Also they were the firmest believers that ordination confers on the priest a new status quite different from the laity, and that being a part of the bishop's team and doing what the bishop asks is central to one's priesthood.

Were these patterns caused by selection factors? The first test we made was to control for age, and we did this by re-computing all of the tables for men 40 or younger only. The tables came out the same, indi-

cating that presence or absence of older men does not explain the overall patterns we found.

How about other selection factors? There are many, and we cannot assess them. We therefore have no proof that the differences we found are the *products* of differences in seminary training; it could be that they were the products of the different kinds of people who entered the different types of seminaries, or some other unknown factor. Our findings in this analysis are only suggestive, not at all conclusive.

An additional complicating factor is that seminaries vary in many ways, only one of which we have attempted to measure here. The seminaries which we lumped together as "free-standing" are known to vary in basic philosophies and programs. Yet our categorization forced them into a single category, with subsequent major loss of explanatory power. Our study of the effects of theologates cannot be more than suggestive.

Effect of Transition Programs and Mentoring Programs

As noted in Chapter 1, about one-third of these priests had taken part in transition and mentoring programs during and after their theologate. These programs typically extend over several years, including both the last year or two of theology and the first year or two after ordination.

Our questionnaire asked two questions, one about transition programs and one about mentoring programs after ordination, but the priests' reports on them were so similar that for simplicity we look at the effect of only one. Since the time period after ordination is crucial, we focus on the question, "Did you ever participate in a formal program that mentored you and helped you in your role as an associate pastor or pastor?" Because the question mentions parish positions (not the educational apostolate), it is not surprising that more diocesan than religious priests had taken part—31% of the diocesan and 24% of the religious.

Do the priests who partook in mentoring programs differ in attitudes from the other priests? The answer is yes. Our survey turned up numerous differences which seem to be attributable to the mentoring experience. Look at Table 7.1. It shows the 15 strongest and most persuasive relationships; in addition we found three more which were significant and had 10-percentage-point differences.

The relationships in Table 7.1 are all consistent, all in the expected direction. They occur with regard to the practical skills and knowledge needed in ministry, not so much to basic priestly identity. They seem to fit the desired goals of mentoring programs, and for some reason they are stronger for the religious priests than for the diocesan. As before, we cannot prove that the associations were a product of the programs, since we cannot control for selection factors. Possibly the priests who took part in the programs were already different from the others before the programs began, and thus the outcomes we found are due to unknown prior factors. But the findings are so clear, consistent, and compatible with mentoring programs that they are quite convincing. Our conclusion is that the outcomes are at least partly a result of mentorship programs. In any event, throughout the survey the priests endorsed the mentorship programs based on their experiences. No doubt they have a good effect.

Effect of First Assignment

In Chapter 3 we saw that the priests differed greatly in their evaluation of their first assignment after ordination. On the positive end, 39% of the diocesan and 41% of the religious priests said their first assignments were "very helpful," but at the negative end, 17% of the diocesan and 8% of the religious priests said they were "detrimental." Is there a long-lasting effect of this experience? To check, we divided all of the respondents into persons who considered their first assignments helpful and those who did not. (The first group is comprised of those saying the assignments were "very helpful" or "helpful," and the second group of those saying the assignments were "not too helpful" or "detrimental"; the first contained 63% of the diocesan priests and 69% of the religious priests.) We compared the two on 52 attitudes.

We found some definite relationships. The experiences with first assignments seem to have a lasting effect. Table 7.2 includes the nine strongest relationships in the data; six other relationships met the criteria for inclusion, but they were too scattered and diverse to be important. Table 7.2 displays three distinct patterns. First, present-day morale is higher for the priests who had good first assignments. This is shown at the top of the table. The relationships are stronger for diocesan than for religious priests. Second, the priests who had good first assignments have better relationships with other priests, bishops, and superiors today than do the others; again the relationships are stronger for diocesan than for religious priests. Third, the priests with good first assignments feel more favorable to rectory living than do the others;

TABLE 7.1 Comparison of Priests Who Had or Had No Formal Program Which Mentored Them and Helped Them As Associates or Pastors (Percents)

	Diocesan		*Religious*	
	Program	*No Program*	*Program*	*No Program*
How well did your theologate prepare you in the following areas? ("Very well" or "Well")				
Catechesis	72	54	—	—*
Pastoral care and counseling	79	65	93	77
How well did the seminary prepare you to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation? ("Very well")	43	32	—	—
How well were you formally prepared in the following areas prior to ordination? ("Very well" or "Well")				
Planning and decision making	—	—	65	47
Conflict resolution	44	32	59	40
Art of conducting meetings	37	24	42	29
Affirming people	67	57	88	69
Self-discipline needed to accomplish work	—	—	87	76
Using social analysis to understand the parish or ministerial setting	41	29	54	39
Understanding the secular political forces that influence your work	38	28	56	42
Working with women	69	57	87	70
Working with lay staff	63	51	83	62
Working with Afro-Americans	—	—	40	25
Working with other ethnic or racial groups	—	—	42	29
To what extent do you feel you are utilizing your important skills and abilities in your present assignment? ("A great deal")	—	—	49	38

*Relationships are shown here only if significant at .05 and with at least 10 percentage points difference.

priests with unfavorable first assignments more often prefer living outside of rectories or communities.

In sum, the experiences during first assignments seem to carry over and to affect both morale and also relationships with other priests and with authorities. The patterns in the data are quite constant on these particular topics, and they seem convincing. But they could be the result of selection factors.

As an initial control for selection factors, we calculated tables concerning first assignments for only those priests 40 or younger today. This is to control for age. If the presence of older priests affected the relationships, or if older priests had unique experiences in their first assignments, the new tables would be different. But the tables turned out almost identical to the original ones. Therefore the presence of older priests in the data has no noteworthy influence on the effects of first assignments.

We conclude that the relationships in Table 7.2 are probably genuine effects of the first assignments. The relationships in the data may be artificially strengthened by selective memory—so that priests with lower morale today tend unfairly to blame their first assignments for their unhappiness, or vice versa. One must remember that the ratings of the first assignments were no more than subjective feelings, hence susceptible to influence by recent experiences. Still, we believe Table 7.2 depicts some real effects of the first assignments. Whether the assignments were felt to be good or bad is associated with high vs. low morale today, warm vs. cool relationships with other priests, bishops, and superiors, and liking vs. disliking rectory living. Bishops should take note of this finding and avoid giving newly ordained priests first assignments which are likely to be less than helpful for their growth.

TABLE 7.2 Associations Between Having a Helpful or Unhelpful First Assignment and Various Attitudes (Percents)*

	Diocesan		*Religious*	
	Helpful Assignment	*Not Helpful Assignment*	*Helpful Assignment*	*Not Helpful Assignment*
Morale				
Taking all things together, how would you say things are these days—would you say you're very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy? ("Very happy")	37	25	—	—
If you had your choice again, would you enter the priesthood? ("Definitely yes")	65	43	63	50
To what extent are you utilizing your important skills and abilities in your present assignment? ("A great deal")	39	27	—	—
Relationships				
How satisfied are you with the following? ("Very satisfied" or "Somewhat satisfied")				
Relationship with fellow priests	65	49	—	—
Relationship with bishop or superior	62	45	—	—
How comfortable are you with the following persons when you need a confidant on a personal matter? ("Very," "Somewhat," or "Slightly comfortable")				
The bishop or superior	57	42	76	59
How often do you get together with priests, e.g., in renewal days or support groups? (About once a month or oftener.)	53	42	—	—
"As a priest, I feel that I am a member of the bishop's team. When I am doing a job that has the local bishop's approval, I am doing priestly work." (Agree strongly or agree somewhat)	47	34	36	26
Living Situation				
What type of living situation do you feel would best help you in your priestly work? ("Outside a rectory or community," #3 or #5)	31	45	19	30

*Relationships are shown here only if significant at .05 and with at least 10 percentage points difference.

COMMENTARIES ON

A Survey of Priests Ordained Five to Nine Years

REV. HOWARD BLEICHNER, SS

This comprehensive study of recently ordained clergy by Fr. Eugene Hemrick and Dr. Dean Hoge presents us with a very representative snapshot of young priests ordained five to nine years. The rate of response to the Hemrick-Hoge survey was high: 67% of diocesan, 57% of religious priests in the United States. The findings of the study deserve then to be taken very seriously.

Still, the data are not self-interpreting. They represent, as noted, a series of snapshots of an institution in transition—the priesthood—which need sensitive interpretation to make sense at all. The purpose of this commentary is to indicate those conclusions which seem clear to one observer and those areas which are more complex and not so easy to understand.

Priesthood on the Mend

Let me begin with its most obvious conclusion. The priesthood in 1990 is by all reckoning a much more settled institution than in 1970. The reader's attention will quickly be drawn to the improved morale of young priests. Roughly 90% of all priests describe their general situation as "very happy," or "pretty happy." The figures on related questions—willingness to choose the priesthood once again, encouragement of vocations—are also encouraging. Overall, the picture of the priesthood is better or, at the least, clearly improving.

Seminaries and Their Limits

Another obvious result. Seminaries of all kinds succeed at what they put their minds to: teaching the basic curriculum (Scripture, Sacramental Theology, Systematics) and imparting positive attitudes toward lay people, men and women, and lay ministry. For most seminary professors these are priority items and they appear as such in the ratings young priests give their seminary education. The failures are also, I think, hardly surprising: church administration, RCIA, formation for celibacy. But if such failures are predictable, they also represent areas in which improvements can be made. More adequate training in RCIA and church administration, better preparation for celibate living are some obvious places that seminaries can note for improvement.

In other areas, the case is not so clear. Here seminary training perhaps should be evaluated from another point of view. What are its limits? What is the seminary *not* able to do under the best of circumstances? It is difficult, for example, to envision a seminary or theological school which could prepare a priest for *all* phases of priestly ministry, for those tasks which are and will ever remain part of "on the job training." Hence, it is not surprising that young priests felt less prepared for planning and decision-making, conflict resolution, conducting meetings, ethnic ministry, etc. How does one prepare a priest for the tasks which only first come with ordination and an assignment? Certainly, some subjects, some skills can be taught before ordination. But can some skills be best taught after?

The Living Situation of Priests

The living situation of priests in their first assignments emerges as a significant factor. Is community living—necessary for seminary formation—a good indicator of the kind of living situations many priests, especially diocesan priests, encounter after ordination? Probably not. Are they trained in community for a ministry which later on is carried out on a much more individual basis? What conclusions then should be drawn about the extent and intensity of seminary community before ordination?

Clearly, according to Hemrick-Hoge, the seminary did not prepare priests for what they often encountered in their first assignment: the experience of rectory living, of unhappy men, lack of support, the need to consciously counterbalance an unsupportive environment with outside interests. For 20% of diocesan and 23% of religious the first assignment was not helpful in making the transition from seminary to priestly ministry. For 17% of diocesan priests, it was actually detrimental. Significant as well is that the present living situation of many young priests is not what they would like to experience in this regard. Such problems cut across diocesan and religious lines and raise obvious questions. Is it possible to balance out the desire for better living situations—for a modicum of supportive community—with institutional needs? Given a degree of dissatisfaction with present living arrangements, the generally high overall appraisal of priestly life, noted above, emerges as even more noteworthy.

Looking at education and living circumstances together, perhaps one of the major conclusions which emerges from the Henrick-Hoge study for this observer may not focus primarily on the seminary at all, but rather on continuing education and a proposal which emerged in the recent Synod on Priestly Formation in October 1990, introduced by Bishop Donald W. Wuerl of Pittsburgh. It is time to formalize the on-going formation of priests? In the long run, can we prepare a *Ratio fundamentalis sacerdotalis*, and then a PPF for ongoing education, something adapted to the needs of men after ordination to aid them in continuing education and formation, and to help them live in more satisfying circumstances as well? We have insisted on the value of on-going education and on the importance of community. Young priests have taken us seriously. Perhaps we need to help them now in a more organized way.

Diocesan and Religious Priests

The data on religious and diocesan priests are complex and not easy to interpret. At times, the categories themselves may get in the way. In broad strokes, Hemrick-Hoge classify diocesan seminarians and priests as "institutionally" oriented, more supportive of church structure. Religious seminarians and priests, on the other hand, are more oriented toward "community," more concerned about dialogue with the world. Here it is well to recall that the particular institutional form which most religious orders take on is precisely an orientation to community. In other words, the above differences also occur within more overarching categories.

When one examines such differences more closely, dichotomous "ideal types," diocesan versus religious, institutional versus communal orientation, often give way in the flesh to a more complex pattern of interaction. Given some differences, the practices of piety of recently ordained priests, diocesan and religious, are quite similar. Both are equally puzzling when it comes to understanding the pattern of spirituality in regard to the Breviary, the sacrament of Penance and Scripture reading. Certainly the interest in prayer and spirituality, the positive value of celibacy and the evangelical counsels—a traditional bailiwick of religious—represent an increasing concern of diocesan priests. For those less comfortable with structure and governance, religious priests seem to be more closely engaged than diocesan with the social teachings of the bishops.

In effect, then, diocesan and religious priests while exhibiting significant differences (some of them quite traditional) are also engaged in a complex pattern of interaction. Official documents ask religious to regard themselves as part of one presbyterate with the local bishop as its head. The new ordination rite reflects this emphasis closely. Diocesan priests, on the other hand, are concerned about spirituality in a way which reflects the influence of religious.

Priestly Identity

Once again, the results of the study are not always easy to interpret. Young priests not only act with a sense of priestly identity but they seem confident in that identity and are rather balanced. They are not defensive yet are not prone to confuse their role with others. Where that difference—the distinctiveness of priestly identity—is grounded is not equally clear. Only 62% of diocesan and 50% of religious regard sacramental ordination as conferring a priestly character on a seminarian. How does one interpret such a response?

Seminary College

The Hemrick-Hoge study also sheds light on the effectiveness of the college seminary in recent years. Their results indicate that among current priests ordained five to nine years, there is little difference in attitudes and performance between those who attended a college seminary and those who did not. That is not the final word on the college seminary and

certainly not on college formation. But it does give the reader much to ponder: what kind of formation at the college-level these days will be most effective in the long run? Not a simple question to answer.

Rev. Howard Bleichner, SS is the Executive Director of the Bishops' Committees on Priestly Formation and Vocations.

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, OSB

This survey of priests ordained in the years 1980 to 1984 interests me as an ordinary of a diocese and as chairman of the NCCB Priestly Formation Committee. I have an added interest in that some 500 priests were ordained during my tenure as rector of Saint Meinrad Seminary in Indiana from 1971 to 1987. It is encouraging to see the great majority of priests ordained five to nine years are doing well.

It is also enlightening to compare the data of the survey to the major preoccupations of the bishops gathered at the October 1990 International Synod on priestly formation in Rome. There is a striking congruence of the primary concerns of our young priests and those of the bishops of the church around the world.

I doubt that any other profession has been studied and evaluated as much as seminarians and priests in recent decades. At least indirectly there has been constant evaluation of seminaries. The apostolic visitation of our U.S. seminaries conducted in the 1980s indicated that priestly formation programs have undergone a lot of positive development since the Second Vatican Council. Seminaries have worked hard and well to adapt to the needs of the church in our times.

And change continues. As one reads the data of this survey in the context of priestly formation in 1991, it is very important to note that the challenges of priestly formation in 1980 were different as compared to 1990. There are differences in the seminarians too, but frankly I don't think the differences in candidates are as significant as the differences in seminary formation.

The data gives reasons for great satisfaction and reasons for concern about the challenge of priestly formation. It is reassuring to note that so many of our young priests are truly happy to be immersed in priestly ministry, dramatically calling into question some recent emphasis on low priestly morale, at least among the more recently ordained. At the same time I see some factors in the data that might undermine the staying power of happiness and effectiveness in priestly ministry for the long haul.

I will comment briefly on implications of the survey from two perspectives: that of the young priests and that of present and future priestly formation programs.

Three Challenges for Young Priests

As I observe new ordinands adapting to full and active diocesan ministry over the years, three major challenges emerge which I believe are highlighted by many of the survey responses. A) Is the new priest willing to say yes to the challenge of being a public "*persona*," a public leader in the church? B) Secondly, is he willing to take on the identity and the reality of being a *spiritual* leader in the community of faith? C) Finally, is the new priest willing to say yes to being "grown up"?

Being a Public Person

Being a "public" person in the church means, among other things, giving up the desire to be a "free agent" who pretty well controls his life according to his own terms. A priest is at the service of the community and is faced with community expectations.

Being a "public person" also tests one's willingness to assume authority and responsibility in the church. This, of course, also means associating oneself in obedience to the bishop, for the sake of the unity of the local church. The responses of our young priests suggest that an understanding of authentic authority as service in the church and an understanding of effective leadership, including collaboration, need further attention in priestly formation.

Saying Yes to Being a Spiritual Leader

Saying yes to the role of spiritual leadership in the community of faith has many implications. Of all the data revealed in this current survey, responses about the spiritual life of the priest concern me most. If priests are not spiritual leaders we miss a fundamental point about priestly identity, an identity rooted in the order of faith. I am sure no priest and no seminary would disagree that if Christian conversion is not our first priority, the rest of ministry is not founded on solid rock. If daily prayer and the sacrament of penance and reconciliation and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament are not the fundamental means to and support for Christian conversion, what are?

Critics dismiss the Liturgy of the Hours as monastic prayer. The fact that most often the Hours cannot be prayed in common at specified intervals during the day does not render the Breviary inadequate as a structure for a priest's prayer for and in the name of the church. In my experience, priests who do not honor their promise to pray the Liturgy of the Hours are in jeopardy of letting go of other promises as well. Generally the demands of ministry is the given reason priests "do not have time to pray." Pressures are great, but if we are too busy to pray, do we really believe in God?

I propose that the fundamental challenge of priestly formation today is to find an effective way to call seminarians to a lasting commitment to evangelical conversion modeled on the life of Jesus Christ. The deliberations of the 1990 Synod of Bishops confirm this conviction. The synod fathers affirmed that the practice of personal prayer, celibate chastity, simplicity of life, obedience and service in pastoral charity are the gospel way and are not reserved for monks in a monastery.

Saying Yes to Being Grown Up

The third challenge to the ordinand, saying yes to being grown up, is lifelong for all of us. At root for a public spiritual leader, the challenge is saying yes to taking up the cross of self-denial freely and generously and with a wholesome spirit. It means a continuous and reasonable pursuit of self-knowledge without self preoccupation, and this in relationship to God and those with whom we live and work and pray and play. For the most part, our seminaries are doing a good job at helping seminarians come to terms with self-understanding. Responses of our young priests affirm this kind of development.

The challenge of rectory living requires more than ordinary flexibility and generosity, and also realism about one's expectations. If there are shortcomings in formation programs of personal development, unrealistic expectations might be raised about the level of intimacy one can achieve in imperfect human relationships. Human relationships are sometimes idealized and impressions are given that high levels of intimacy are within timely reach.

Maybe more attention to priests' need for mutual respect and care for each other as brothers would help. Emphasis needs to be made that a realistic fraternal relationship is rarely a "best friend" relationship. A wholesome bonding among seminarians is important, even if in today's unfortunate climate this might be interpreted as exclusive, especially in situations where lay students are enrolled. We should not miss the point that fraternal bonding needs to be fostered in the realm of prayer as well as the realm of interpersonal skills.

Human relations skills can be described and even practiced, but there is much that simply cannot be taught. I don't think there is a satisfactory way to prepare for the tensions in advance of rectory living, just as one can't really effectively prepare a young couple for all the realities of life in marriage. I also think that if given the opportunity to offer an opinion about rectory life in years gone by the responses of priests would have been similar. Nevertheless it is important to provide a reasonably wholesome environment for the assignment of associate pastors along with effective mentoring and support programs in the early years of priesthood.

Implications for Seminaries

One response of the priests' survey that most clearly resonates with the recent International Synod of Bishops is a consensus that the first priority for future priestly formation in the universal church is a clear focus of the identity of the ministerial priesthood.

This clarity of identity is urgent in priestly formation in the 1990's, particularly in seminaries where programs of preparation for lay participation in ministry are integrated with those of priesthood candidates. The need is greatest where a strong feminist agenda is a driving force in theological education.

In my view, one of the differences in priestly formation in 1991 compared to 1980 is the phenomenon of advocacy for "re-imagining" traditional theological teachings of the church to accommodate the feminist agenda and to foster a brand of "collaboration" in the ministry of the church which renders the leadership role of the priest as "manager" or "facilitator" or "enabler" of other ministries.

The Second Vatican Council calls for refreshing collaboration in the mission of the church, but something more is going on. The general effect, if not the intent, of much current teaching is a fuzzy confusion of all ministerial roles in the interest of equalizing political power. And is not "re-imagining" theological teaching in the church a way to disengage from the traditional doctrine of the church in order to accommodate new concerns?

The seminary must give a clear presentation of the theology of priesthood and the ideal of celibate chastity from the beginning of and throughout the

program of priestly formation. There must be a clear consensus of faculty and formation staff concerning the specific identity of the priesthood and the value and practice of a celibate way of life. An atmosphere of hesitation about the role of priesthood in the seminary is demoralizing. The most eloquent teaching of priestly identity and the celibate way of life is the visible practice of that way of life.

The survey of priests ordained from 1980 to 1984 suggests the beginning of one other issue facing priestly formation, as well as formation for all roles in the church; namely misunderstandings about authority in the church. Some years before I was ordained as bishop of Memphis, I raised this point among seminary personnel. The controversy about authority and loyalty in the church has become even more intense in much of seminary formation in the 1990s. The misunderstanding derives from a fundamentally secular evaluation of ecclesial authority. I get the feeling that a significant number of seminaries rather effectively scan the secular signs of the times, especially those of academe, but I wonder if they are realistically in touch with ecclesial developments, especially among the bishops of the church?

Authority in the church is more than a socio-political reality. A proper understanding is discerned only from the *de facto* tradition of theological teaching rooted in the apostolic era and developed through the centuries. Perhaps less attention to the teaching of church history and especially writings of the patristic era in our seminaries explains some of the priests' responses about the role of authority and their own relationship to authority in the church. Their responses reflect what they were taught, or perhaps more importantly, what they weren't taught.

There are so many fine indicators of the health of priestly ministry which speak for themselves in the responses of the priests to the survey. While the points I raise are important, they only underscore the fact that there is always room for improvement in priestly formation. Most of the responses to this survey by young priests show once more that our seminaries have been doing a good job. Undoubtedly they are equal to the challenges of priestly formation for the third millennium.

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Rev. Richard W. Burton

The ceremony of ordination employs symbols which say a great deal about the identity of the diocesan priest. He is first a communal man. The community gives its assent to his choice by the bishop. The ordinand prostrates while the community prays over him. Secondly, he has a unique relationship with his bishop. With his hands clasped by the hands of the bishop he promises respect and obedience to the bishop and his successors. Thirdly, he is a member of the local presbyterate. The presbyters present at the ordination lay hands on him and welcome him into their company with a kiss of peace.

The identity of the priest is forged not only in a seminary, but also at ordination and through ministry. Also his friendships will most probably be forged in ministry as well. There needs to be some way for the threefold relationship of the priest which forges his identity—with the community, the presbyterate and the bishop—to be taken seriously in the early stages of formation and ordination.

There is, I believe, an undercurrent in the study that religious clergy are to live in community while the diocesan clergy are not called to a communal lifestyle. This question of the charism of the diocesan clergy needs to be addressed. Religious have worked on this and the study shows it. As a result, religious are more focused than the diocesan clergy.

I believe the charism question of the diocesan priest lies at the core of some of the findings of the study, namely, the tilt toward feeling more priestly in sacramental settings, the leaning toward an institutional model of the church, a desire for a closed seminary—one without non-ordination candidates—and a feeling of being less than comfortable working with women religious. I am not going to attempt an analysis of the charism of the diocesan clergy. However, I do believe that to set the diocesan priesthood *outside* the concept of community is a grave mistake.

Community is fundamental to the identity of the diocesan clergy. The priest is ordained to serve and build up a local church; he is ordained to build up community. Isn't this the radical shift of the Second Vatican Council?

Regardless of whether we view the church from an institutional aspect rather than a communal aspect, the preferred stance of the diocesan participants of this study, the church is the Mystical Body of Christ, the People of God. We are talking about a communal experience. The diocesan priest can never be a "man

apart" in the sense that he is apart from the people. The question, then, is not whether one views the priestly role as institutional and set apart or as a communal role, but rather how does one envision himself building up the commu:.ity?

Parishes which are most healthy are ones that do a lot of community building. Whether this is in the form of small groups, development of lay ministries, using the RCIA as a model for the parish, etc., these parishes do a lot to energize people. These parishes help the people to hear each other and to do for each other. The parish priest becomes an "orchestra leader," directing the building up of the community of faith.

The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* states "the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed; at the same time it is the fount from which all the church's power flows (#10). The spiritual life of the diocesan priest is liturgical at its core. To live in union with the liturgy day in and day out is to have a liturgical spirituality, a communal spirituality. Liturgical spirituality is a radical commitment to community.

To prayerfully celebrate the Eucharist on Sundays and during the week demands a liturgically based spirituality. To preach daily as the church suggests demands an extraordinary attention to the lectionary and the spirit of the liturgical season. The priest must at times be a "man apart," to spend time with the Word so that he can share it with the community. But the spirituality of the diocesan priest is liturgical and communal at its roots.

Paragraph #7 of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* suggests that Christ is truly present when the people gather to pray and sing. Community isn't magic; it doesn't just happen. The quality of worship depends on the sense of community and vice versa. Community building is essential. And the diocesan priest is right in the middle of it. There he finds his Lord.

The study shows an ambivalence toward the celebration of the Hours. Only 38% of the priests responded to praying the Liturgy of the Hours on a daily basis. This seems to indicate that the whole notion of the "office" for the diocesan clergy needs to be rethought.

The current reform of the office is a hodgepodge based on compromise. It neither reflects a monastic office nor the ancient and all but unknown cathedral office. Anyone who has experienced the genuine monastic office or the cathedral office knows what a dismal experience it is to recite or even sing the hours as presented in our current books.

The church envisions these hours for everyone, but the format is an entanglement of ribbons! The office remains the most unreformed of the reformed liturgy. The "office" question will require radical surgery if it is ever to find its place in the practical prayer life of the clergy and the laity alike.

The diocesan clergy and the laity deserve a cathedral/parish celebration of the hours. I don't believe that this suggestion to rediscover the cathedral office for the diocesan clergy is too far fetched; no more so than the liturgy in the vernacular was during the 1950s.

In the meantime Morning and Evening Prayer can be recited in the parish church. My experience is that a few of the faithful will come. With some "tinkering," the experience can become quite good. If the priest is the leader of morning and evening prayer in the parish church then his role as leader of prayer and his prayer life would be simultaneously enhanced.

The "lifestyle" and celibacy question is also a question about community. The American rectory in days not too far past was really modeled on a religious house, or was an extension of the seminary. While no prayer was shared, common meals and dress were mandated, common recreation expected. "The fathers gather for a drink before dinner," or "The fathers always watch the evening news together." This lifestyle, complete with curfews for the young, no doubt, had something to do with the myth that life in a rectory preserves celibacy.

The basic insight was sound. Celibacy without community makes no sense or perhaps is not possible. But is community for the diocesan clergy found in the rectory or in a cronyism that no longer exists—the 40-hours circuit—or principally in the parish?

I believe that celibacy is often endangered in a rectory setting. Frustrations of rectory life simply add to sexual tension and the man hits the streets. Traditional rectory living with its pressures, lack of privacy, and unfulfilled expectations only make celibacy burdensome. Most often priests "go out" to find their sanity.

If the priest is at heart a community builder, then his communal needs and expectations are met in a fuller but different way in the parish at large. The lifestyle question takes on a different skin. His residence becomes secondary. He might live alone or with others of his own choosing away from "the plant." Modern communication would ensure service to the

people. Based on my experience, the financial cost for such arrangements would be no greater than the rectory arrangement.

Some wag a few years ago suggested that the identity problem of the priest lay in the identity question of the bishops and the laity. Priests according to the Second Vatican Council are extensions of the bishop and servants of the laity. According to the wag priests are extensions of men who don't know who they are, sent to serve people who do not know what they want!

I would suggest that the good news of this study concerning the priestly identity has something to do with the role of the bishop being clarified in the last 20 years as well as the laity being able to better identify their needs. However, the frustration which seems to be sadly present among the parish clergy needs to be examined. The fact that priests serving in ministries outside of the parish are more content should tell us something.

The parish priest I believe is the "middle child" of the clergy. He is clearly present, greatly loved, but often overlooked. Placed in middle management the parish priest is often neglected when it comes to his personal and ministerial well-being. Bishops most often pay attention only when there is a crisis. The personal relationship with the bishop so clearly symbolized at ordination often becomes a matter of words thereafter. Diocesan bishops often do not "walk the talk."

Bishops most frequently have had a good relationship with their own bishops and little experience in parish work prior to their episcopal ordination. The church has not often raised middle management to the top. As a result the bishop is often not in an experiential position to understand the parish and the frustration of the parish priest.

Priests need bishops and bishops need priests; it is the relationship envisioned by the Second Vatican Council. I believe the primary role of the diocesan bishop is to foster his relationship with his priests and the relationship among the men in his presbyterate.

If the bishop fails to do this, then a certain "congregational" attitude sets in; other priests are seen as professionals which do not effect one's own ministry and the bishop is seen as a necessary evil in a sacramental church: "He needs me more than I need him!" If these relationships are not taken seriously by the priest and by the bishop, then as the man matures in ministry he will become a lone ranger at best and at worst angry and frustrated.

A Survey of Priests Ordained Five to Nine Years was undertaken to assist seminaries to be most effective. A formation program which does not include **active** and **formal** participation in parish ministry is going to be less than effective. I am *not* suggesting sending the man to a parish to hang around. I am suggesting that a formal structure be established which would ensure adequate feedback to the seminary from the clergy and laity alike. The laity often know best who will be a good parish priest.

The skills of building a parish community can best be learned in a parish actively building such a community. The skill of parish organization, of running a meeting, of understanding the RCIA, in fact, all of the non-theological skills so essential for the parish priest can best be learned experientially under the guidance of a pastor/mentor and a competent lay committee. This system would also seem to open the way for parishes and pastors to have ongoing and needed input into seminary programs.

A Survey of Priests Ordained Five to Nine Years has shown that much good has been accomplished since the Second Vatican Council in the formation programs of seminaries. We are better off today. As the church looks at priestly formation, we are in a good place to further expand formation programs so that parish life can become a significant and formal part of seminary formation.

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Rev. Robert J. Wister

A recent article by Paul Wilkes, "The Hands That Would Shape Our Souls," published in *The Atlantic*, calls current seminarians the "most intensively studied group that have ever prepared for a religious vocation." In fact, he says they have become the focus of a "sort of social scientists' cottage industry." As the director of the N.C.E.A. Seminary Department, which has sponsored many of these studies, I feel as if I am one of the proprietors of the cottage. If we consider the seminary as a building, it is certainly one which has undergone rather extensive renovation in the past quarter century.

The 25 years since the close of the Second Vatican Council have seen profound changes in the seminaries

of the United States. The number of seminarians and seminaries has decreased markedly while the programs have been renewed and changed in accord with the wishes of the council. Every aspect of seminary formation, academic, spiritual and personal, has to a greater or lesser extent been altered. Some of these developments have been carefully planned and carried out, others have occurred due to societal changes outside the control of the seminaries. Many changes have become part of seminary life, others have been tried and discarded.

None of these developments or changes was proposed or implemented for its own sake. In each instance the goal of improving the quality of ministry has been the motivating factor. Through the years the seminary community and its leadership have monitored this gradual unfolding.

A significant part of this process has been assisted by serious research projects over the years. The present study completes a series of N.C.E.A. studies of Catholic priests and seminarians funded by the Lilly Endowment. The previous studies have given us information against which to compare and measure many of the responses in this study. This study enables us to weigh the effectiveness of the seminary programs of the late 1970s and the early 1980s, and to evaluate the implementation of the post-conciliar changes.

This study has probed areas in which the seminary alumni found training effective for ministry as well as areas where they found it to be lacking. The outcomes are generally positive and confirm that the efforts to renew seminary education during this period were successful. It is a reflection on the past formation and present aspirations of priests which hopefully will assist the seminaries in planning for the future.

This study comes several years after the conclusion of the Vatican Visitation of the United States seminaries and the Roman Synod on priestly formation and continuing education. The lengthy and exhaustive study of the visitation, completed in 1986, was summarized in three letters from the Congregation for Catholic Education, the last of which was jointly issued by the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes. The letters were quite positive in tone and complimentary to the American seminaries about the renewal of seminary studies. They also pointed out areas for improvement and for further reflection.

Among the emphases of the synod were 1. adequate preparation before theological studies, 2. priestly identity, 3. celibacy, 4. morale, and 5. continuing formation. The present study provides valuable insights into these questions, in that they come from those priests who have recently experienced seminary training.

The Vatican Visitation was, to a great extent, an affirming experience; the synod has set new challenges. The results of this study reflect a positive affirmation of the ongoing task of seminary renewal.

This study and the history of seminaries confirm that they have repeatedly proven their ability to respond to challenges to improve quality. In the 1960s there was criticism of the general quality of the teaching of sacred scripture. The Second Vatican Council specifically called for a renewal of scriptural studies in the seminaries and in the church at large. A concerted effort to achieve this goal was initiated. More priests were assigned to pursue advanced degrees in this discipline and the biblical studies curriculum was improved. The present study confirms that the endeavor has proven effective. A striking percentage of respondents (93%) reported that they felt they had been "very well" or "well" prepared in scripture by their seminary. The percentage is not too much lower in the major theological disciplines. The impact of the renewal of scriptural studies is further confirmed by respondents who felt that biblical studies were most helpful both in their priestly ministry and in their personal development. Scripture is seen as an academic discipline, an important ministerial skill and a source of personal spiritual enrichment. The successful renewal of scriptural studies augurs well for the future. The desired goal of excellence has been attained in this area. Similar strong and organized efforts can attain equally positive effects in areas needing attention.

An area of personal formation cited as in need of deeper attention in seminary preparation in learning how to live the celibate life. The priests noted that there is a need for clear, honest and direct discussion of celibacy, its rationale and its problems. Today's lack of cultural support for celibacy and the questioning of its value call for urgent improvement in existing programs.

An area of practical skills which received great affirmation was pastoral counseling. It was seen as a very helpful pastoral skill and personal resource. Its importance is further highlighted when contrasted with the less positive evaluation of seminary preparation in related practical skills such as planning and conflict resolution. It is heartening that a great number of respondents stated that they had sought post-ordination training in these areas. This raises a peren-

nial question, should seminaries emphasize training in theology and related disciplines to the full exclusion of practical skills? Throughout the last decade seminaries have been asked to train seminarians in a myriad of skills, and have responded to many of these challenges. But a point is reached when adding more courses or putting more burdens on a faculty could compromise the integrity and goals of the institution.

I believe that the basic role of the seminary is to prepare a man with the academic, spiritual and personal training needed to *begin* pastoral ministry. It is the responsibility of the diocese or religious community to provide the support and the facilities for the priest to build on his seminary training, to continue to grow in the spiritual life, to sharpen his existing abilities and to develop new skills.

It may be that in their responses priests are giving us a partial answer to another question, what should be the content of post-ordination training? The recent synod recommends organized programs of continuing formation. From experience priests in the study give church leadership important information for planning programs in areas where priests need further education. Future planning within the seminaries would profit from coordinating a skills program with priests' continuing education programs.

The 1990 synod discussed "morale" issues such as "burnout" and loss of a spirit or a vision. Today the media is concentrating on "crisis" in the priesthood, highlighting difficulties and scandals and trivializing ministry in situation comedies and mystery shows. The study is heartening in that the great majority of priests are satisfied with their work (80%), are happy (90%), and would enter the priesthood if they had it to do over again (over 80%). However, they have some serious suggestions to make to improve their ministry.

It is quite interesting to note the significant majority of priests who would opt for a living situation other than the one in which they are presently. The tensions of incompatible personalities living together can certainly cause morale and other problems. Nor can we minimize the difficulties caused by living "over the store." The morale issue is important here, since it relates to ministerial effectiveness. The question was not concerned with personal preference alone. The priests were asked what kind of living situation would best help them in their priestly work. The preponderance of negativity shown here to the traditional assigned rectory group is certainly something which is worthy of imaginative innovation, especially when we consider that a variety of living situations may improve the quality of ministry.

Perhaps even more significant is the importance of the first assignment in the life of a priest. A well-chosen first assignment and the presence of some form of mentoring program emerged as valuable tools in the transition from seminary to ministry. In spite of renewed personnel practices in most dioceses and religious communities, a discouraging number (37% of diocesans, 31% of religious) judged their first assignment as not helpful or detrimental. Moreover, negative first assignments clearly affect satisfaction in ministry. The frequency of changes of assignment noted in the survey may also affect morale. Whether these changes are a result of dissatisfaction with assignments or pastoral needs, it is significant that a majority of the priests, all ordained fewer than ten years, were already in at least their third assignment.

An alarming number of priests felt that they were not prepared to minister to various minority, ethnic and racial groups. The overwhelming majority of respondents were of Irish, Italian, German and Slavic heritage. Given the changing makeup of the American Church, this lack of ease in ministering to these ever growing segments of the Catholic population can have serious consequences in evangelical outreach and certainly merits attention within the seminaries and in continuing education programs. In most recent years there has been an increase in the number of Asian-Pacific students in the seminaries. The number of Hispanic and African American seminarians remains much below their proportion of the Catholic population and continues to be a matter of grave pastoral concern.

In a variety of areas, significant attitudinal differences were noted between diocesan and religious priests. The origin of these differences is arguable. To some extent they reflect the different emphases in religious formation programs; to some they probably reflect different attitudes and directions which distinguish the religious vocation from that of the diocesan priest.

Another major issue of the synod was preparation for theological studies. A majority of the priests surveyed had attended a college seminary for all or part of their college training. However, in most areas of personal attitudes and ministerial satisfaction, they do not differ significantly from those who entered theologates without previous seminary background. The number of entering students with college seminary background is continuing to decrease. College seminaries, especially free-standing ones, are facing serious financial problems due largely to decreasing enrollment. In many instances, these seminaries provide

assistance in preparing minority students for theological studies.

Many colleges and theologates have already established pre-theology programs of various kinds. The focus and content of these programs is a question which will occupy a great amount of time and effort in the immediate future.

Paul Wilkes' article in *The Atlantic*, which I cited earlier was sub-titled "The Changing and Often Troubled World of American Seminaries." It is a world which has certainly changed and is continuing to change. There are problems and "troubles," but fortunately they are recognized and being addressed. Like previous studies, this study required a great deal of work. But it mirrors the selfless dedication of the seminary personnel of the recent past and the present. The hundreds of men and women who labored to follow the guidance of the conciliar documents on the renewal of seminaries can be justly proud of their accomplishments.

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Most Rev. Donald W. Wuerl

When I read *A Survey of Priests Ordained Five to Nine Years*, I was struck by how many of the attitudes reflected in this work mirror some of the affirmations of the most recent synod, the 1990 Eighth Ordinary Synod of Bishops, which had as its theme the "Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day." Even without reference to the synod, the documentation in the study is impressive. This is particularly true when we could get the impression from some media and other sources that morale among priests in the United States is at an all-time low and that Catholic priesthood is an endangered species with no hope of avoiding extinction.

What caught my attention first of all was the table that speaks of "Measures of Satisfaction and Morale." While I make no claim to great facility in reading tables and comparing percentiles, it seems fairly evident that the data tell us that among both diocesan and religious priests the vast majority (90% and above) are "very" or "pretty happy" with "things all together." I do not know of any other profession (recognizing that the priesthood is not just one more profession) that can make a comparable claim. All the more so am I reassured when I see that over 80% would make the same choice and become a priest if they had to choose all over again. If statistics tell us anything, they say that is not the same case for people married for five to nine years. It is also impressive to find that over two-thirds of the priests participating in this study indicated that they felt they are utilizing their important skills and abilities in their present assignment. I wonder if a study of any workplace anywhere in the world would turn up this level of satisfaction among those in their "present assignment."

In the face of so many encouraging signs as we face the 1990s—and the new generation that is now making career decisions—the study presents additional heartening news. Four out of five priests responded that they would "encourage vocations to priesthood and religious life as much as possible." Since priests as role models are the major factor in helping a man make a decision to enter a formation program, this data can only be a source of encouragement. A priest's happiness with his ministry has a certain contagious quality about it.

This spirit of rejoicing in priestly ministry brought me back to the days of the October 1990 synod. Three things in particular struck me about that synod as it relates to our discussion of priesthood. First, the synod was reflective of a truly universal church. From my seat far in the back of the hall (we sat according to episcopal ordination seniority) it was evident that the church in Africa, Asia and South America is a very dominant part of the church in our day and an area of the church that is growing with great rapidity—at least in Asia and Africa. This in turn obliged me to remember that we should never allow our view of priesthood to be so circumscribed by immediate needs that we fail to consider the wider, universal, vision. We do not want to give in to the temptation to see in our local concerns reasons to change our understanding of priesthood so that it is no longer in continuity with that of the rest of the church. We sometimes hear of "conflicting ecclesiologies" and "opposing theologies of priesthood" as if there were not one church of which we are all members and one priesthood to which all of us who are ordained have been called. The 1990 Synod is an indication that our faith and teaching has a universal quality that finds expression in all of the church universal.

A second element that impressed me, perhaps most profoundly of all, was the presence of bishops from Eastern and Central Europe. They were participating in an ecclesial gathering outside of their own land for the first time in decades. One bishop spoke

of having been a priest for 42 years, 40 of which he served in an underground church—both as a priest and later as a bishop. The presence of bishops from catacomb churches lead to a little soul-searching in terms of the blessings we take, perhaps, for granted in the United States. I wonder what the questions would be in a study of priests in lands where the very celebration of the Eucharist in public was outlawed. What connection would such a study find between social conditions and response to the call to priestly ministry—vocations?

The third point was that, in the face of the diversity involving people from countries that are free and prosperous as well as bishops from lands that are only shaking off their chains and nations that are mired in poverty, nonetheless, from all of these bishops there emerged very quickly a consensus. In my reading of the 1990 synod, the consensus revolved around several elements, all of which seemed to find an echo—a strong echo—in the study of priests five to nine years ordained.

The 1990 synod was unanimous in its reaffirmation of the nature, role and value of the Catholic priesthood. The synod spoke of the priest as one identified with Christ whose task it is to make present and alive in the church today the continuing ministry of Christ. Coupled with the affirmation of priesthood in itself was a resounding reaffirmation of the value and the work of our priests. Bishop after bishop, whether it was on the floor of the hall or in the small working sessions, spoke in superlative terms of the dedication, service, love and self-giving of the priests of the churches they shepherded. In our small group discussion (English Language "C") bishops from the Philippines, India, the United States, Australia, Bangladesh, Europe, to mention but a few, spoke of the dedication and joy of their priests as if they had just read Table 4.2 or had even been asked to participate in the study. I would expect that that same resounding reaffirmation of priesthood would reflect the statements about the priesthood found in Table 5.4 where three out of four priests themselves announce that they feel "proud of most of the men we have as priests" and where nine out of ten feel that the "priesthood is highly respected by those I serve."

The synodal fathers also agreed that the priest is first and foremost a servant of the Spirit. The discussions, papers and talks all underlined the spiritual nature of priestly work and the need to renew priestly spirituality in view of the new evangelization taking place all around us. There seemed to be a fairly general recognition that in the world today there is a hunger for God and a thirst for the things of the Spirit. Looking around, I see many signs, particularly in the faces of the young women and men who in such increasing numbers are returning to the sacraments, that the needs of the human spirit cry out to be met. In spite of all the noise around us, noise from all the loud voices competing for the allegiance of human hearts, noise raised by every sector of our secular world, the quiet and soft voice of the Spirit has not been stilled. It continues to speak to human hearts. Not by bread alone do we live!

Upwards of two-thirds of all the priests involved in the study indicate how positively they view priesthood and overwhelmingly reaffirm, sometimes with as much as 95%, that they understand themselves as "a herald of the word by preaching," "a sign and guarantee of Eucharistic unity in the church" and charged with "building and nurturing a community spirit in which there is a sense of belonging and mission." They responded affirmatively on through a whole list of statements that reflect the unique spiritual nature of priestly work and sense of satisfaction in carrying out this mission in the name of the church and in the person of Christ as head of the church. I also think it important to note that the study shows an almost unanimity among priests that they are comfortable with their task and mission as spiritual leaders.

Nonetheless, it is disturbing to find that about one-third of those responding to the questionnaire agree in some sense with the statement that the idea that a priest is a "man set apart" is a "barrier to the full realization of true Christian community." This seems to confirm the concern expressed in a variety of places that there is an acceptance among some priests of the congregational idea of the church in opposition to the church's teaching that priesthood and the differentiation introduced by Sacred Orders are of the very Christ-willed structure of the church and constituted for the service of the whole church.

The teaching of the church proclaims in clear terms that some are ordained to participate more specifically in the priesthood of Christ so that they might also more specifically minister to the rest of the Body of Christ. The Second Vatican Council teaches that the sacrament of Orders differentiates members of the community and sets some apart for priestly ministry. It is hard to reconcile the data in Table 5.3 with the hope that our seminaries have successfully communicated this critical and essential Catholic teaching to all those entrusted to their care. Fully one-third of those recently ordained do not understand ordination as conferring a permanent character which makes a

priest "essentially different from the laity within the church." This is a serious deficiency. While only 2 percent actually disagreed strongly with the church's teaching on their own identity, nonetheless, if one out of three priests is unaware of the unique nature of the priesthood, we have a serious problem. On the other hand, in a more positive vein, nine out of 10 recognize that "whatever else is said about the humanitarian preoccupations and interpersonal relationships of priests, we must remember that the priest is the man in society who proclaims God's Word and provides for sacramental encounter with God in Christ."

At the same time, the study points to a need to articulate the unique spirituality of the priesthood and to provide means to help the priest grow in his own special form of spirituality. I take this to mean that in practice priests understand and respond to the thirst for God's presence manifested by the faithful while, at the same time, indicating a need for a well-articulated spirituality of their priesthood and priestly ministry.

Another affirmation of the 1990 synod, in my reading of it, involved priestly celibacy as a special kind of love and the recognition of the value of celibacy as a gift to the priest and a gift to the church. While there was much fluttering in the secular press over the issue of celibacy, most of the debate took place in the press room rather than in the synod hall. I think it fair to say that among the bishops at the synod, the value of priestly celibacy was not only recognized but willingly affirmed. I think the study reflects something of the struggle today to articulate well the theological value of celibacy. I am not sure if this represents anything more than a reaffirmation of the simple statement that it is a very real, uphill struggle, in the face of the culture in which we live, to teach and share the value of celibacy as a gift to the priest and a gift to the church—a gift ultimately from God.

If anything came through strongly in the 1990 synod it was the value of seminary formation. In the 400 years since the Council of Trent established the seminary structure more or less as we know it today, there has been adaptation and considerable change. Yet the seminary as an institution continues to offer a proven program of priestly formation. The synod spoke of the intellectual and academic preparation, the personal and spiritual formation and the pastoral experiences. In the section dealing with preparation for priestly ministry, the study reports the highest level of satisfaction in the areas of scripture, systematic and sacramental theology, liturgy and homiletics. The study tells us that our recently-ordained priests feel that the seminary has well prepared them for the world in which they must work and the priestly ministry to which they have been called. This recognition and commendation on the part of those recently ordained goes hand in glove with the observations and commendations of their bishops.

In conclusion, allow me to repeat that one of the most fascinating things for me about the study is the convergence of attitudes and opinions, viewpoints and values, among those who responded to the study and, in my opinion, those who attended the 1990 Synod. Even though the two groups were not consciously comparing ideas, nonetheless, a basic unity around some very important themes—especially the importance of priesthood and its spiritual mission—seems evident. I find that appreciation of priesthood not only essential to the new evangelization today, but reflected both in the 1990 Synod of Bishops and in *A Study of Priests Five to Nine Years Ordained*. For this I think we all have reason to be as satisfied with our newly-ordained priests as they are with their preparation and ministry.

Most Rev. Donald W. Wuerl, Bishop of Pittsburgh, is the Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry.

APPENDIX A

TABLE A.1 Dioceses in Sample

New England
Hartford, CT
Norwich, CT
Portland, ME
Boston, MA
Fall River, MA
Worcester, MA
Burlington, VT

Middle Atlantic
Newark, NJ
Camden, NJ
New York, NY
Albany, NY
Brooklyn, NY
Buffalo, NY
Ogdensburg, NY
Rochester, NY
Rockville Centre, NY
Philadelphia, PA
Allentown, PA
Altoona-Johnstown, PA
Pittsburgh, PA
Scranton, PA

East North Central
Chicago, IL
Belleville, IL
Rockford, IL
Joliet, IL
Indianapolis, IN
Detroit, MI
Grand Rapids, MI
Marquette, MI
Saginaw, MI
Gaylord, MI
Cincinnati, OH
Cleveland, OH
Columbus, OH
Youngstown, OH
Milwaukee, WI
La Crosse, WI

West North Central
Dubuque, IA
Des Moines, IA
Sioux City, IA
Dodge City, KS
Salina, KS
Wichita, KS
St. Paul-Minneapolis, MN
New Ulm, MN
St. Cloud, MN
St. Louis, MO
Kansas City, St. Joseph, MO
Springfield-Cape Girardeau, MO
Fargo, ND
Rapid City, SD

South Atlantic
Wilmington, DE
Orlando, FL
St. Petersburg, FL
Atlanta, GA
Baltimore, MD

East South Central
Covington, KY

West South Central
Little Rock, AK
Alexandria-Shreveport, LA
Baton Rouge, LA
Lafayette, LA
Lake Charles, LA
San Antonio, TX
Austin, TX
Beaumont, TX
Corpus Christi, TX
El Paso, TX
Galveston-Houston, TX
Dallas, TX
Fort Worth, TX
Victoria, TX

Mountain
Pueblo, CO
Boise, ID
Santa Fe, NM
Gallup, NM
Las Cruces, NM
Cheyenne, WY

Pacific
Los Angeles, CA
San Francisco, CA
Monterey, CA
Oakland, CA
San Diego, CA
Stockton, CA
Orange, CA
San Bernardino, CA
San Jose, CA
Baker, OR

TABLE A.2 Characteristics of Priests 5 to 9 Years Ordained, 1970 and 1990 (Percents)

	1970		*1990*	
	Diocesan	*Religious*	*Diocesan*	*Religious*
Age				
34 or younger	48	22	26	8
35-36	32	26	32	24
37-38	10	15	14	26
39-40	5	16	9	16
41-50	6	19	14	22
51 or older	0	1	5	4
Current Position				
Full-time pastor without special work outside the parish	6	4	15	7
Pastor with special work outside the parish	3	4	9	4
Full-time associate pastor	42	13	36	14
Associate pastor with special work outside the parish	17	3	11	4
Full-time diocesan administrator	4	0	6	1
Other	28	76	23	71
Did You Earn a Degree After Ordination?				
Yes, Masters Degree	17	27	24	41
Yes, Doctoral Degree	3	10	6	14

TABLE A.3 Comparison of Spiritual Practices, 1970 and 1990, in Percents (With 1990 Data Weighted to Make Ages of Respondents Comparable to 1970)

	1990		*1970*	*1990*		*1970*
	Diocesan	*Comparable Age to 1970*	*Diocesan*	*Religious*	*Comparable Age to 1970*	*Religious*
How often do you *usually* celebrate Mass each week?						
More than once a day	14	13	*	8	8	*
Usually every day	48	48	74	43	43	73
5-6 times a week	29	29	19	20	21	11
2-4 times a week	9	9	6	22	22	11
Once a week	1	1	1	6	5	2
Less than once a week	0	0	0	1	1	2
How frequently do you recite the Breviary?						
Daily for all of the Hours	13	11	23	12	12	19
Daily for some of the Hours	25	26	11	40	41	19
All or some of the Hours several times a week	21	20	11	22	22	12
All or some of the Hours several times a month	16	16	8	7	6	6
Not at all	10	11	47	6	5	44
I substitute another spiritual exercise	16	16	*	14	13	*
How often do you read the Bible outside of the context of the Liturgy and the Divine Office?						
Every day	13	13	11	14	15	15
Several times a week	32	31	26	37	37	26
About once a week	25	27	20	22	23	19
About once a month	11	11	8	12	11	8
Only on very special occasions, or every few months	14	14	16	12	12	16
Never, or so rarely that it probably shouldn't count	5	5	20	3	3	16

*Not included in the responses.

TABLE A.4 Factor Loadings, Three Rotated Factors, All Data

Item	*Factor I*	*Factor II*	*Factor III*
#1	−.281	.677	−.102
#2	.037	.428	.489
#3	.270	.175	.483
#4	.385	.572	−.328
#5	.692	.077	.106
#6	.687	.027	.118
#7	.116	.514	.143
#8	.790	−.168	.116
#9	.662	−.123	.063
#10	−.021	.554	.179
#11	.632	.086	.023
#12	−.011	.566	.222
#13	.447	.118	.107
#14	.556	−.192	.330
#15	.769	−.222	.171
#16	.353	.059	.529
#17	.096	.163	.715
#18	−.165	.675	.119

NOTE: Factor I is "Institutional Orientation vs. Communal Orientation," and Factor II is "Social Leader Tendency vs. Personal Witness Tendency." Factor III is not used in the present analysis. Factor I accounts for 24.1% of the variance, Factor II for 15.1% and Factor II for 6.4%

FIGURE A.1 Plot of Ideals of the Priesthood on Factors I and II

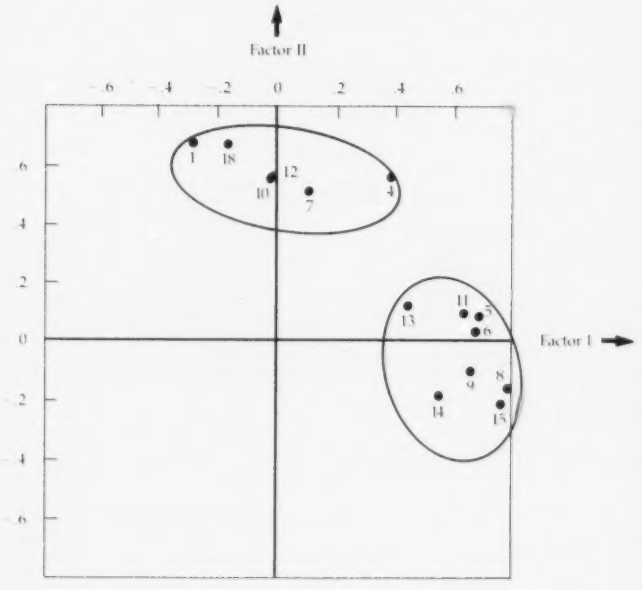

TABLE A.5 List of American Theologates

The following 57 theological schools in the U.S. or sponsored by the U.S. church were included in the analysis of effect of type of theologate on the priests. They were coded into three types: free-standing (F), university-related (U) and collaborative (C).

U American College, Louvain
U Aquinas Institute of Theology, MO
C Catholic Theological Union, IL
U Catholic University of America, DC
U Centro de Estudios Dominicos, PR
F Christ the King Seminary, NY
F De Andreis, IL
C De Sales School of Theology, DC
C Dominican House of Studies, DC
C Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, CA
C Franciscan School of Theology, CA
F Holy Apostles College, CT
U Holy Trinity Seminary, TX
F Immaculate Conception Seminary, NJ
F Immaculate Conception Seminary, NY
C Jesuit School of Theology, CA
F Kenrick Seminary, MO
F Mary Immaculate Seminary, PA
F Maryknoll School of Theology, NY
U Mater Dei Institute, WA
U Moreau Seminary, IN
F Mount Angel Seminary, OR
F Mount St. Alphonsus, NY
F Mount St. Mary's Seminary, MD
F Mount St. Mary of the West Seminary, OH
U North American College, Rome
F Notre Dame Seminary, LA
C Oblate College, DC
C Oblate School of Theology, TX
F Pontifical College Josephinum, OH
F Pope John XXIII Seminary, MA
F Sacred Heart School of Theology, WI
F Seminary of St. Vincent de Paul, FL
F SS. Cyril & Methodius Seminary, MI
F St. Anthony-on-Hudson Seminary, NY
F St. Bernard's Seminary, NY
F St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, PA
F St. Francis School of Pastoral Ministry, WI
F St. Hyacinth, MA
F St. John's Provincial Seminary, MI
F St. John's Seminary, CA
F St. John's Seminary, MA
U St. John's University, NY
U St. John's University School of Theology, MN
F St. Joseph's Seminary, NY
F St. Leonard College, OH
F St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, IL
F St. Mary Seminary, OH
F St. Mary's Seminary and University, MD
U St. Mary's Seminary, TX
F St. Meinrad School of Theology, IN
F St. Patrick's Seminary, CA
U St. Paul Seminary, MN
F St. Thomas Theological Seminary, CO
F St. Vincent Seminary, PA
C Washington Theological Union, MD
C Weston School of Theology, MA

TABLE A.6 Comparison of Religious Priests Trained in Three Types of Seminaries (Percents)

Number of Cases:	*Priests From Free-Standing Seminaries* (163)	*Priests From University-Related Seminaries* (43)	*Priests From Collaborative Seminaries* (253)
How often do you read books on spirituality? ("Every day" or "Several times a week")	51	47	35
How well did your theologate prepare you in the following areas? ("Very well" or "Well")			
R C I A	30	51	36
How well did the seminary prepare you to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation? ("Very well")	42	40	58
How well were you formally prepared in the following areas prior to ordination? ("Very or "Well")			
Affirming people	67	62	79
Understanding the secular political forces that influence your work	37	40	53
Working with women	67	73	84
Working with lay staff	57	66	74
Working with Afro-Americans	22	18	37
What is your present level of satisfaction with the following? ("Very satisfied" or "Somewhat satisfied")			
Relationship with women religious with whom you work	75	83	85
As you go about your priestly ministry, how comfortable do you generally feel about the following? ("Very comfortable")			
The governance of the church	16	5	6
The moral teachings of the church	28	18	14
The spirituality of the priesthood	41	14	31
The permanent diaconate	51	22	43
Strongly agree or agree:			
Ordination confers on the priest a new status or a permanent character which makes him essentially different from the laity within the church.	60	45	42
As a priest, I feel that I am a member of the bishop's team. When I am doing a job that has the local bishop's approval, I am doing priestly work.	44	18	27

*Relationships are shown here only if significant at .05 and with at least 10 points difference.

APPENDIX B

Raw Data

This appendix gives the responses for the entire sample. There were 1,519 usable questionnaires. Unless otherwise indicated, "No response" is not included in the percentaging.

Item	*Description*	*Level*	*Percentage*	
			Diocesan	*Religious*
1	What is your age at last birthday?	34 or younger	26	8
		35-36	32	24
		37-38	14	26
		39-40	9	16
		41-50	14	22
		51 or older	5	4
2	In what year were you ordained?	1980	18	16
		1981	24	24
		1982	21	21
		1983	21	21
		1984	17	18
3	Religious Order	Jesuits S.J.		16
		Franciscans O.F.M.		9
		Benedictines O.S.B.		8
		Redemptorists C.SS.R.		3
		Dominicans O.P.		5
		Capuchins O.F.M. Cap.		6
		Oblates of Mary Immaculate O.M.I.		2
		Vincentians C.M.		3
		Franciscans (Conventuals) O.F.M. Conv.		4
		All Other Orders		45
5	How many transfers since your first assignment have caused you to take up a new residence?	0	3	10
		1	25	27
		2	31	29
		3	26	20
		4	10	10
		5 or more	6	4

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
6	What is your current position?	Full-time pastor without special work outside the parish	15	7
		Full-time diocesan administrator	6	1
		Pastor with work outside the parish	9	4
		Full-time associate pastor	36	14
		Assoc. pastor with special work outside the parish	11	4
		Educational apostolate	7	27
		Hospital chaplain	2	2
		Prison chaplain	0	1
		Social service apostolate	0	1
		Missionary apostolate	1	7
		Other	13	33
7	Which best describes your main racial or ethnic background?	English, Scot., Welsh, English-Canadian	8	10
		Irish	26	24
		German, Austrian, Dutch, Swiss	19	20
		Italian	10	10
		French, French-Canadian, Belgian	8	6
		Eastern Europe (Polish, Lithuanian, Slovak, Ukrainian, Russian, Yugoslavian)	12	12
		Spanish (Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico)	4	4
		Asian, e.g. Vietnamese	0	1
		Filipino	1	0
		Black American	1	1
		Black African	0	0
		Native American Indian, or Aleut	0	0
		Other	2	4
		Multiple Responses	10	6
8	Before beginning theological studies, how many years were spent in the following preparation programs?			
		Pre-theology None	83	76
		One year	13	10
		More than one year	4	14
		Novitiate None	94	7
		One year	5	74
		More than one year	1	19
		Seminary None	39	49
		College One or two	12	9
		Three or four	48	41
		Five or more	1	2
		Formation None	93	62
		Programs One	2	9
		More than one	6	30
		Other None	84	72
		One	1	5
		More than one	15	14

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
9	In the seminary were you part of a formal transition program, i.e. a program aimed at preparing you for your first assignment (e.g., mentor program)?	Yes	33	26
10	Did you ever participate in a formal program that mentored you and helped you in your role as an associate pastor?	Yes	31	24
11	Since ordination, have you been engaged in full-time or part-time study at any college or university?	Yes, full-time	13	31
		Yes, part-time	30	29
		No	56	39
12	Did you earn a degree after ordination? If so, please identify the type and field of study.	Yes, masters	24	41
		Yes, doctoral	8	14
		Field of study for masters:	(N = 236)	(N = 219)
		1. Theology, dogma, moral theology, M.Div., liturgics, scripture, ethics	54	53
		2. Spirituality	5	6
		3. Canon law, law	15	2
		4. Church history	0	1
		5. Psychology, counseling, C.P.E.	12	7
		6. Languages, literature	1	4
		7. Education, educational administration	8	11
		8. Anthropology, sociology, political science, social work	3	6
		9. Other	4	10
		Field of study for doctorate:	(N = 60)	(N = 77)
		1. Theology, dogma, moral theology, M.Div., liturgics, scripture, ethics	58	42
		2. Spirituality	5	3
		3. Canon law, law	14	5
		4. Church history	2	1
		5. Psychology, counseling, C.P.E.	1	8
		6. Languages, literature	2	8
		7. Education, educational administration	11	5
		8. Anthropology, sociology, political science, social work	0	12
		9. Other	6	17
13-26	How well did your theologate prepare you in the following? Very well or well:	Scripture	93	94
		Catechesis	60	58

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
		Social/Medical ethics	67	66
		Spirituality	73	75
		Moral theology	77	83
		Liturgy	81	85
		Pastoral care/counseling	70	81
		Homiletics	81	83
		Church history	78	82
		Sacramental theology	89	91
		Church administration	11	12
		RCIA	34	33
		Systematic theology	86	90
		Spiritual direction	51	54
27-38	How well were you formally prepared in the following areas prior to ordination? Very well or well.			
		Planning and decision making	43	52
		Conflict Resolution	36	45
		Art of conducting meetings	28	32
		Affirming people	60	74
		Self-discipline needed to accomplish work	73	78
		Using social analysis to understand the parish or ministerial setting	33	43
		Understanding the secular political forces that influence your work	31	46
		Working with women	61	74
		Working with lay staff	55	67
		Working with Hispanics	27	30
		Working with Afro-Americans	19	28
		Working with other ethnic/racial groups	20	32
39-50	Since ordination have you made any effort to acquire the following skills? Yes.			
		Planning and decision making	88	86
		Conflict Resolution	84	80
		Art of conducting meetings	81	75
		Affirming people	90	88
		Self-discipline needed to accomplish work	78	81
		Using social analysis to understand the parish or ministerial setting	59	59
		Understanding the secular political forces that influence your work	65	70
		Working with women	90	89
		Working with lay staff	91	90
		Working with Hispanics	41	47
		Working with Afro-Americans	28	41
		Working with other ethnic/racial groups	41	50

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
51	How well did the field education in the seminary carry over into your ministry?	It has been very helpful in meeting the challenges of my ministry	35	45
		It has been somewhat helpful in meeting the challenges of my ministry	43	41
		I really don't know	5	2
		It was of little help	14	9
		It was of no help	3	1
		I did not have field training	1	3
53	How would you rate your first assignment after ordination in terms of its helping you make the transition from the seminary to priestly ministry?			
		Very helpful	39	41
		Helpful	24	28
		Not too helpful	20	23
		Detrimental	17	8
55	What best describes your current living situation?			
		An assigned group in rectory or community	59	67
		A self-chosen group in a rectory or community	6	13
		A self-chosen group living outside a rectory or community	1	3
		Alone in a rectory	22	5
		Alone outside of a rectory	7	4
		Other	6	9
56	What best describes the living situation that you believe would best help you in your priestly work?			
		An assigned group in rectory or community	14	31
		A self-chosen group in a rectory or community	37	40
		A self-chosen group living outside a rectory or community	21	17
		Alone in a rectory	10	2
		Alone outside of a rectory	14	3
		Other	5	8
57-64	How much time do you spend on each of the following activities? (Mean)	Worship, leadership, e.g., Sunday worship, funerals, weddings	6.76	5.44
		Sermon preparation	5.86	5.45
		Administrative work	5.25	5.34
		Other leadership, e.g., community affairs, guiding, directing or setting example	5.40	5.63
		Counseling, e.g., discussing personal concerns with other persons	5.73	5.75

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
		Educating, e.g.,instructing (formally or informally), providing information	6.21	6.16
		Personal prayer or meditation	5.12	5.36
		Other activity or function	6.36	6.75
65-74	How satisfied are you with each of the following? (Very or somewhat satisfied)			
		Current work in ministry	86	87
		Personal health and leisure	67	63
		Spiritual life	56	60
		Psychological well-being	72	80
		Sexual integration or living a celibate life	57	62
		Opportunities for continuing education	44	65
		Relationship with fellow priests	59	72
		Relationship with bishop or superior	56	68
		Relationship with the laity with whom you work	91	93
		Relationship with women religious with whom you work	79	81
76-93	How would you rate the following for your ideal of the priesthood? (Percent primary or strong ideal)			
		Enabling laity to minister in areas a priest traditionally ministers	73	82
		Being a representative of the Gospel's teachings which refer to the needy in our midst	89	92
		Being a herald of the Word by preaching and encouraging the faithful to study and meditate on the scriptures	95	93
		Being a moderator who coordinates ministry in the church	70	62
		Being a sign and guarantee of eucharistic unity in the church	79	67
		Being an extension of the bishop, collaborating with and helping him	59	44
		Building and nurturing a community spirit in which there is a sense of belonging and mission	97	96
		Preserving the ecclesial and social structure of the church through teaching and upholding the church's traditions	61	44
		Being a leader of Christian worship in the community by performing liturgical rites which are exclusive to the priesthood	77	63

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
		Being in dialogue with the wold to enhance constructive action and harmony within it	64	81
		Being a pastoral leader entrusted with the spiritual governance of the laity	68	53
		Being an activist in getting the faithful to engage in issues like poverty, racism, sexism, and pro-life	53	60
		Being a catechist responsible for the teaching role of the community	78	63
		Living celibacy as a sign of devotion to the coming of God's kingdom	56	60
		Pastoring the church through the transmission of doctrinal truths	56	42
		Practicing the prophetic role of the priest by interpreting God's Word for the faithful	92	89
		Preaching the Gospel consciously through personal witness	98	97
		Encouraging the Christian community to develop its own ministries	88	89
94-104	How comfortable are you with the following persons when you need a confidant on a personal level? (Very comfortable)			
		A close priest friend	77	82
		A layman friend	56	62
		Another priest, but not a close friend	8	10
		A laywoman friend	50	49
		The bishop or superior	11	21
		Spiritual director, be that a priest, sister, or lay person	68	69
		A woman religious friend	37	48
		A parent	28	23
		A married couple	32	29
		A close relative	28	29
94-104	Very, Somewhat or Slightly comfortable	A close priest friend	97	99
		A layman friend	95	97
		Another priest, but not a close friend	73	76
		A laywoman friend	91	93
		The bishop or superior	52	71
		Spiritual director, be that a priest, sister, or lay person	96	97
		A woman religious friend	88	92
		A parent	72	67
		A married couple	86	86
		A close relative	73	76

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
105-113	As you go about your priestly ministry, how comfortable do you generally feel about the following? (Very comfortable)	The social justice teachings of the church	45	51
		The governance of the church	15	10
		The moral teachings of the church	28	19
		Celebrating the sacraments	86	80
		Being a public figure	35	35
		The spirituality of the priesthood	33	32
		Non-ordained persons fulfilling responsibilities once reserved solely to the ordained	52	62
		Symbols of affiliation, e.g. wearing the collar or religious habit	46	33
		The permanent diaconate	41	46
105-113	How comfortable are you with the following? (Very, Somewhat or Slightly comfortable)	The social justice teachings of the church	89	88
		The governance of the church	62	47
		The moral teachings of the church	80	68
		Celebrating the sacraments	99	98
		Being a public figure	86	87
		The spirituality of the priesthood	87	85
		Non-ordained persons fulfilling responsibilities once reserved solely to the ordained	90	95
		Symbols of affiliation, e.g. wearing the collar or religious habit	86	75
		The permanent diaconate	79	77
114	How often do you *usually* celebrate Mass each week?	More than once a day	14	8
		Usually every day	48	43
		5-6 times a week	29	20
		Less than 5 times a week	10	29
115	How frequently do you recite the Breviary?	Daily for all of the Hours	13	12
		Daily for some of the Hours	25	40
		All or some of the Hours several times a week or less	37	29
		Not at all	10	6
		I substitute another spiritual exercise	16	14
116	How well did the seminary prepare you to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation?	Very well	35	50
		Somewhat well	45	36
		Not very well	17	13
		Not at all	3	1

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
118	How frequently do you receive the sacrament of penance?	On a weekly basis	5	2
		On a monthly basis	19	19
		Every couple of months	33	35
		Once or twice a year	40	38
		Never	4	6
119	How often do you read the Bible outside the context of the Liturgy and the Divine Office	Every day	13	14
		Several times a week	32	37
		About once a week	25	22
		About once a month	11	12
		Once every few months or less	19	15
120	How often do you read books on spirituality?	Every day	9	12
		Several times a week	23	30
		About once a week	19	17
		About once a month	19	16
		Once every few months or less	31	24
121	How often do you meet with a spiritual director	Once a week or more	3	4
		About once a month	28	37
		Once every few months	27	22
		Only on very special occasions	20	17
		Never, or so rarely it shouldn't count	22	20
122	How often do you get together with priests, e.g. in renewal days or support groups?	Once a week or more	13	14
		About once a month	37	23
		Once every few months	20	23
		Only on very special occasions	20	24
		Never, or so rarely it shouldn't count	11	16
123	How often do you make private days of renewal?	Once a week or more	1	2
		About once a month	8	17
		Once every few months	39	35
		Only on very special occasions	35	31
		Never, or so rarely it shouldn't count	18	15
124	To what extent do you feel you are utilizing your important skills and abilities in your present assignment?	Not at all	1	1
		Comparatively little	9	5
		To some degree	20	16
		Fairly much	36	37
		A great deal	34	41

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
125-145	How much do you agree with the following statements?			
125	Being a priest-psychologist, priest-sociologist, or a priest-social worker is as priestly as working in parishes and missions.	Agree strongly	30	46
		Agree somewhat	35	34
		Uncertain	22	15
		Disagree somewhat	10	4
		Disagree strongly	3	2
126	Ordination confers on the priest a new status or a permanent character which makes him essentially different from the laity within the church.	Agree strongly	30	21
		Agree somewhat	33	29
		Uncertain	18	20
		Disagree somewhat	17	28
		Disagree strongly	2	2
127	The idea that a priest is a "man set apart" is a barrier to the full realization of true Christian community.	Agree strongly	14	19
		Agree somewhat	23	30
		Uncertain	25	21
		Disagree somewhat	37	28
		Disagree strongly	2	2
128	Being a chancery official, an administrator in the province, or the administrator of a Catholic institution is as priestly as working in parishes and missions.	Agree strongly	25	33
		Agree somewhat	38	39
		Uncertain	25	18
		Disagree somewhat	11	8
		Disagree strongly	2	2
129	Whatever else is said about the humanitarian preoccupations and interpersonal relationships of priests, we must remember that the priest is the man in society who proclaims God's Word and provides for sacramental encounter with God in Christ.	Agree strongly	53	46
		Agree somewhat	33	36
		Uncertain	7	9
		Disagree somewhat	4	5
		Disagree strongly	3	5
130	I feel I am most a priest when I am saying Mass and hearing confessions.	Agree strongly	26	23
		Agree somewhat	37	29

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
		Uncertain	23	31
		Disagree somewhat	12	16
		Disagree strongly	1	1
131	I used to think I knew what a priest was supposed to do, but I really don't know any more.			
		Agree strongly	3	2
		Agree somewhat	17	10
		Uncertain	23	24
		Disagree somewhat	55	62
		Disagree strongly	3	3
132	As a priest, I feel that I am a member of the bishop's team. When I am doing a job that has the local bishop's approval, I am doing priestly work.			
		Agree strongly	13	8
		Agree somewhat	30	25
		Uncertain	28	31
		Disagree somewhat	22	28
		Disagree strongly	8	8
133	There should be concern about the increase in interfaith marriages.			
		Agree strongly or somewhat	9	7
		Agree somewhat	30	26
		Uncertain	29	33
		Disagree somewhat	27	27
		Disagree strongly	6	7
134	Catholicism is becoming less distinguishable as a denomination from other denominations.			
		Agree strongly	7	4
		Agree somewhat	31	28
		Uncertain	26	33
		Disagree somewhat	34	32
		Disagree strongly	3	4
135	We shouldn't worry if some Catholic immigrants get their religion from Protestant evangelical groups, as long as they get some religion.			
		Agree strongly	2	2
		Agree somewhat	7	11
		Uncertain	28	29
		Disagree somewhat	62	56
		Disagree strongly	2	2
136	Ecumenism is a waste of time since we will never come to an agreement on essential doctrines.			
		Agree strongly	1	0
		Agree somewhat	6	3
		Uncertain	21	13
		Disagree somewhat	71	83
		Disagree strongly	1	1

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
137	We should continue to allow Anglican priests, whether married or unmarried, to become Catholic priests.	Agree strongly	33	38
		Agree somewhat	34	31
		Uncertain	12	11
		Disagree somewhat	12	10
		Disagree strongly	10	11
138	I would be happy to attend primaily to the sacramental life and let the laity assume responsibility for most other functions.	Agree strongly	17	20
		Agree somewhat	34	34
		Uncertain	25	25
		Disagree somewhat	20	18
		Disagree strongly	3	3
139	I feel my priesthood is highly respected by those I serve.	Agree strongly	49	56
		Agree somewhat	39	35
		Uncertain	9	6
		Disagree somewhat	2	1
		Disagree strongly	1	2
140	I feel proud of most of the men we have as priests	Agree strongly	25	23
		Agree somewhat	47	47
		Uncertain	19	20
		Disagree somewhat	6	6
		Disagree strongly	3	4
141	There is a critical shortage of priests.	Agree strongly	45	46
		Agree somewhat	33	29
		Uncertain	15	16
		Disagree somewhat	5	5
		Disagree strongly	3	4
142	I encourage vocations to the priesthood and religious life as much as possible.	Agree strongly	46	49
		Agree somewhat	33	35
		Uncertain	13	12
		Disagree somewhat	5	3
		Disagree strongly	3	2
143	I have no problem working side by side with sisters.	Agree strongly	61	71
		Agree somewhat	30	23
		Uncertain	7	5
		Disagree somewhat	2	1
		Disagree strongly	1	1
144	I have no problem having a permanent deacon as a co-worker.	Agree strongly	57	65
		Agree somewhat	29	22

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Diocesan	Religious
		Uncertain	8	6
		Disagree somewhat	3	1
		Disagree strongly	4	6
145	The bishops' pastorals written for the U.S. are helpful to my priestly ministry.			
		Agree strongly	16	26
		Agree somewhat	46	45
		Uncertain	17	16
		Disagree somewhat	9	4
		Disagree strongly	13	10
146	Taking things all together, how would you say things are these days—would you say you're very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?			
		Very happy	32	37
		Pretty happy	58	57
		Not too happy	10	7
147	If you had your choice again, would you enter the priesthood?			
		Definitely yes	57	59
		Probably yes	25	28
		Uncertain	12	8
		Probably not	5	4
		Definitely not	1	1
157	How do you feel about candidates for the priesthood being educated alongside those preparing for non-ordained service to the church? (open-ended; 500 replies were coded) (Percent of those answering approximate only)			
		Agree	48	69
		Agree with reservations	27	19
		Don't know or neutral	12	9
		Disagree with reservations	3	2
		Disagree	10	2

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